

Friday 29 January

Local not-for-profits work together for justice, healing and holistic community support for Sydney's First Nations community

A new community partnership is converging legal and community support in Sydney's inner west.

First-Nations led organisation, Deadly Connections have moved in with Marrickville Legal Centre in Dulwich Hill.

After the organisation's Arncliffe lease ended late last year, Deadly Connections were on the search for a new office space for their team of staff and volunteers while providing an access point for their clients and community. The uncertainty of their situation caused undue stress.

"How do you help support people in crisis when your organisation is in crisis?" asked CEO Carly Stanley.

Marrickville Legal Centre responded to Deadly Connections' social media call-out, opening its offices for the team to establish a new temporary working space.

[Deadly Connections](#) (DC) is an Aboriginal-led, not-for-profit organisation that provides information, referral, advocacy and support to First Nations communities in Sydney's inner city and inner west - particularly those affected by the child protection and justice systems.

[Marrickville Legal Centre](#) (MLC) is a not-for-profit community legal centre based in Sydney's inner west, serving New South Wales. MLC supports people experiencing social and economic disadvantage through general and specialist services including family law, domestic violence and state-wide legal support for people aged 25 and under.

Deadly Connections are now set up in the new space and have hit the ground running for 2021.

"We are so excited about this collaborative partnership, also the opportunities for improved access, cultural safety and innovation in service provision for the most vulnerable members of our community," says Ms Stanley. "This partnership will assist us in achieving a best practice model and puts us a step closer to our longer-term vision of developing a social justice and cultural hub for justice-involved people, families and communities".

The partner organisations have previously worked together through the Youth Justice Coalition (YJC) and in 2020, Keenan Mundine and Dean Lloyd from Deadly Connections led a MLC webinar panel for the launch of MLC and YJC report [Young People, Criminal Records and Discrimination in Employment](#).

Both not-for-profits share the vision that holistic community support is the best way to achieve positive, lasting outcomes for individuals and their families. Working together, the partner organisations plan to strengthen community justice responses and increase community safety through collaborative initiatives that improve justice-related outcomes for the Aboriginal community.

Deadly Connections clients will benefit from increased access to legal and support services, and clients of Marrickville Legal Centre will benefit from Deadly Connections programs and ongoing casework.

Another way the services will be working together to make justice accessible in 2021 is through community legal education for young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

MLC Managing Principal Solicitor Vasili Maroulis says "This is a fantastic opportunity to work more closely with Deadly Connections and, through streamlined referrals, increase access to justice for First Nations peoples."

The joint office is situated at 12-14 Seaview Street Dulwich Hill 2203.