



THE LAW SOCIETY  
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Our ref: CLC/PWrg:1273788

20 April 2017

The Hon. Mark Speakman SC MP  
Attorney General  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

*Mark*

Dear Attorney General,

### **Funding for the Criminal Justice Support Network**

I am writing to you on behalf of the Law Society of NSW regarding the on-going funding of the Criminal Justice Support Network (CJSN), a service of the Intellectual Disability Rights Service.

The CJSN supports people with an intellectual disability in police stations, courts and correctional centres. Assistance is provided to complainants, defendants and witnesses.

This valuable work is undertaken by two teams of volunteers: qualified legal practitioners who give legal advice by phone to complainants or defendants at the police station, and support volunteers who attend police stations, courts and correctional centres.

By ensuring that the people the CJSN support receive legal advice and attend court appearances, they have improved chances of receiving bail, and are more often appropriately diverted. This in turn provides cost savings to the police, courts and Corrective Services NSW.

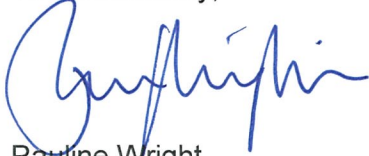
The Law Society understands that funding for the CJSN will end by June 2018, unless the Department of Justice takes over the funding from the Department of Family and Community Services' Ageing, Disability and Home Care arm.

We are very concerned that without funding, this critically important service to people with an intellectual disability will cease to operate.

We support the work of the CJSN, and ask that you give full consideration to providing the necessary funding to enable the CJSN to continue operating on an on-going basis.

Thank you for considering this letter. I would be grateful if questions could be directed at first instance to Rachel Geare, Senior Policy Lawyer, on 9926 0310 or [rachel.geare@lawsociety.com.au](mailto:rachel.geare@lawsociety.com.au).

Yours sincerely,



Pauline Wright  
**President**

Cc. Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood, Secretary, Department of Justice.