

In the Public Interest

Newsletter of the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House Incorporated



Don't forget to look at www.qpilch.org.au for a rundown of all QPILCH's activities.



Walk for Justice

Monday 16 May 2011



Register now!

Upcoming events...

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Can you spare an hour from 7am and \$20 to support access to justice and get a healthy start to the day at the same time? If so, register now for the *Walk for Justice*. If you can't make it to the Walk, you can register and come to the breakfast or just [make a donation](#).

Where else would you want to be on a crisp May morning than walking for justice and eating croissants with hundreds of your colleagues? Your support has been outstanding in previous years and we hope the walk will continue to grow.

The walk raises money for **QPILCH's disbursement fund** which can be accessed to help meet costs involved in pro bono cases. The Walk departs from the Law Courts Complex on George Street at 7am and finishes with a free breakfast on the lawn of Old Government House. For the second year, there will also be a Walk for Justice in Townsville. Thank you to the **Bar Association of Queensland** and **Queensland Law Society** for sponsoring the breakfast and to **QUT Faculty of Law** for donating the use of the Old Government House lawn and equipment for the event.

The croissants are back...

The Walk for Justice breakfast will again be catered by **Espresso Train**, part of the not-for-profit Nundah Community Enterprise Co-operative, which is a social enterprise creating sustainable employment and training opportunities for

people with mental illness, learning difficulty or intellectual disability.



Queensland University of Technology
Faculty of Law



Public Interest Address – 9 June 2011

The 2011 Public Interest Address by The Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Chief Justice of Queensland, will be held at *The Long Room*, Customs House at lunchtime on **Thursday 9 June 2011** from 12.30 to 2pm.

This event will celebrate the 10th anniversary of QPILCH, the legal profession's commitment to pro bono and the fine work of many volunteers – solicitors, barristers, accountants, law students, legal academics, other colleagues and supporters. As numbers are limited, please book early. Invitations will be sent this week.



“Adventures” Art Show – 6 to 10 June 2011

When: Monday 6 June to Friday 10 June 2011

Where: The Riverside Centre (foyer), 123 Eagle Street, Brisbane

The QPILCH Homeless Persons Legal Clinic (HPLC) and Refugee Civil Law Clinic (RCLC) recognise the importance of including people who have been marginalised in mainstream community life.

Volunteer HPLC and RCLC lawyers have joined with clinic host agencies to stage the Adventures Art

Show, which will showcase the artistic talents of refugees and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Numerous artworks will be exhibited, many of which will be for sale with all proceeds going direct to the artists.

The Art Show will be officially opened on **7 June 2011** at 7pm by The Hon Karen Struthers MP, Minister for Community Services, Housing and Women. If you would like to attend the opening, please contact Elizabeth Pendelbury of QPILCH on 3846 6317 or at hplclawyer@qpilch.org.au.



This project is proudly supported by a community grant from the Brisbane City Council.

QPILCH would like to thank the Riverside Centre for generously donating its foyer space as the venue for the Art Show. QPILCH would also like to thank the other financial sponsors:

Dedicated to a better Brisbane



Blake Dawson



News in Brief

QPILCH welcomes new member Xstrata Copper

We welcome new corporate legal unit member **Xstrata Copper**. All lawyers, whether they work in government, as in-house counsel or even if they are retired, can contribute to pro bono. Pro Bono is not just the province of law firms and barristers. We are looking forward to working with Xstrata Copper in developing ways for corporate legal unit lawyers in Queensland to provide much needed assistance to deserving clients. We thank Rochelle Carey, Tony Denholder and Lucy Bretherton for their help in developing a corporate membership strategy.

We also welcome new barrister members **Peter Metzdorf, Mark McCarthy, Dr Gillian Dempsey, Dr Andrew Greinke, Michael de Waard, Michael Fellows, Alexis Gage, Allan Lonergan, Ben van de Beld** and **Dianna Worrell**, who have all joined QPILCH as new members since the start of this calendar year.

Tell your colleagues!

If you know a law firm, barrister, corporate or government legal unit that you think would be interested in joining QPILCH, please encourage them to contact us on 3846 6317 or at contact@qpilch.org.au.

Joanne Rennick appointed life member

On 21 February 2011, the QPILCH Management Committee appointed Joanne Rennick, former QPILCH President, as a life member of QPILCH. Jo's contribution to QPILCH has been unswerving since joining the Committee in 2003. We are very pleased to acknowledge her contribution by welcoming her as a life member. Jo has resigned from the committee but we look forward to her continuing association with QPILCH.

Seeking mediation volunteers

We are seeking more volunteers for the **pro bono mediation referral panel**. QPILCH's Self Representation Service established the panel to allow clients who cannot afford to contribute to the cost of mediation to access a service which may lead to the timely resolution of court proceedings. With courts increasingly requiring mediation before a trial, the cost of mediation creates a significant hurdle for self-represented parties.

Referrals are made on the basis that:

- the self-represented party cannot afford the cost of a mediator;
- the other party will not agree to cover the whole cost; and
- mediation is necessary to progress the proceeding.

Members of the panel:

- must hold mediation accreditation in accordance with the Australian National Mediator Standards;
- must be willing to conduct mediations on a pro bono basis upon referral from the Service; and
- are under no obligation to accept a referral.

QPILCH submitted to the former Attorney-General, the Hon Cameron Dick MP, that government lawyers with mediator accreditation could also participate in the mediation service. We will be making this same submission to the new Attorney, The Hon Paul Lucas MP. If you would like to become involved in the panel please contact Liz Pendlebury on 3224 5166 or by email at courtsadmin@qpilch.org.au.

Flood and Cyclone Legal Help

In January QPILCH joined forces with the Queensland Law Society, Legal Aid Queensland, the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services and other key legal organisations to develop a coordinated response to assist Queenslanders in need as a result of the floods. Not long after, the response was expanded to address the needs of people in North Queensland following on from the devastation affected by cyclone Yasi.

We have been heartened by the many generous offers from QPILCH members, including members who themselves were affected by the Brisbane flood, to extend their pro bono services to assist those in need.

Initial support was sought from QPILCH volunteers who participate in our outreach clinics to attend community recovery centres working in partnership with local community centres to provide advice on a variety of matters, including insurance, tenancy, employment and neighbourhood disputes. QPILCH members also made a significant contribution in the early stages of the response by drafting fact sheets and settling other materials now available for the public at www.floodlegalhelp.qld.gov.au.

From now on, QPILCH members will be integral to providing legal advice and assistance that meets the needs of affected Queenslanders in a sustainable and long-term way. Applications for assistance, mostly from small business owners who are at risk of losing everything and who are ineligible for legal aid, are on the rise and we anticipate this demand will only continue, particularly as applicants seek to dispute conclusions reached by their insurers. QPILCH has established a designated disbursement fund to support the pro bono effort of the legal community in assisting Queenslanders who have been affected by the floods and cyclone. Several QPILCH members have generously donated to this fund. You can donate to this appeal fund by clicking [here](#).

New Corrs secondee

We look forward to welcoming a new secondee, Matthew Hodgson-van Daal from **Corrs Chambers Westgarth** in early May. Matthew will be the sixth Corrs secondee since the program started in 2008 and QPILCH is very grateful to Corrs for its ongoing contribution to QPILCH.

QPILCH submission on discrete task assistance

Many lawyers in private practice provide discrete assistance to clients rather than full representation, whether or not as part of a retainer. QPILCH's Self Representation Service gives assistance on this basis most of the time. There is no statutory recognition of this type of practice, which is likely to increase, particularly as more clients experience difficulty in paying the high costs of legal services.

QPILCH prepared a [submission](#) to the National Legal Profession Reform Task Force recommending new rules to protect lawyers who provide discrete task assistance. While this submission centres on the protection of community-based lawyers assisting self-represented parties, it applies to all lawyers providing this form of assistance to clients. Please send any comments to contact@qpilch.org.au.

First private prosecution against police in Queensland

A client who was assisted by **HPLC volunteers** and counsel to obtain an acquittal in the Court of Appeal more than 2 years ago has become, with the pro bono assistance of **BoeWilliams Lawyers** and **Peter Callaghan SC**, the first individual to successfully bring a private prosecution against the police in Queensland.

Increasing number of applications and referrals

A recent [report by ACOSS](#) said “it was estimated that over 2.2 million people in Australia were living in poverty and 105,000 were homeless, but we believe these numbers are likely to be higher”, and that increasing numbers are being turned away from services.

The number of applications for assistance to QPILCH’s referral schemes has increased 23% from last year. We had been receiving an average of 34 applications per month, until March when we received 62 applications, 82% above the average for the financial year. As a result, you may have noticed that we have been seeking to refer more and more cases this year, many related to employment, family property disputes and debt problems, with a significant number involving applicants with mental illness.

This demand highlights the need for QPILCH to increase its membership so the pro bono load can be spread more broadly and evenly. With this in mind, QPILCH has commenced a membership drive, to date involving:

- membership development by Andrea de Smidt, who has been appointed deputy director to undertake this work;
- a northern centres tour by Catherine Cocks and Karen Kearney who met practitioners, community organisations and government representatives (including court registries) as part of QPILCH’s RRR project;
- staffing a stall at the recent QLS Symposium.

Rural, Regional & Remote Project

Catherine Cocks has been working on the RRR project 2 days a week, to build our capacity to facilitate free legal assistance in areas outside Brisbane.

In early March, Catherine and Karen Kearney travelled to Mackay, Sarina, Proserpine, Cannonvale, Bowen, Townsville and Cairns, where they met with local lawyers and barristers, councillors, members of parliament, court registry staff and community legal centres to discuss the legal needs in those areas and how to work together to assist residents.

In the last quarter we have received 24 applications for assistance from RRR Queensland and seven additional referrals have been successfully made through the RRR Project. These referrals were:

- Mackay based law firm, **Macrossan & Amiet** is assisting an elderly widow to set aside the transfer of a property by her late husband due to undue influence and/or unconscionable conduct. This matter was referred to QPILCH by the Mackay Regional Community Legal Centre.
- **Lauren Coman** of Counsel is providing an advice to a woman from the Cairns region in relation to her options for having her dog returned to her after it was removed while she was in hospital.

- **McInnes Wilson** is assisting the Cherbourg Historical Precinct Group Inc to make an application for the Ration Shed Museum to be endorsed by the ATO as a deductible gift recipient.
- **Matt Black** of Counsel is providing an advice to an elderly woman from the Wide Bay Burnett region in relation to whether the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) has jurisdiction to hear and determine her claim.
- **Suellan Walker-Munro** of Counsel is providing an advice to a man from the Sunshine Coast hinterland in relation to the appropriate jurisdiction within which to resolve a property dispute. This matter was referred to QPILCH by the Suncoast Community Legal Centre.
- **Barry Nilsson Lawyers** and **Jo Chapple** of Counsel are assisting an elderly woman from the Wide Bay Burnett region with Supreme Court proceedings filed in Brisbane seeking specific performance of a contract for the sale of land. The QPILCH Self-Representation Service (Courts) was assisting the applicant with this matter but sought representation for the applicant at a Court ordered mediation through the QLS and BAQ Referral Schemes.
- **Irish Bentley Lawyers** is assisting an applicant from the Darling Downs to enforce an order made by the Federal Magistrates Court against the applicant's former employer requiring payment of \$18,000 to the applicant.

An article about the RRR Project was published in the March 2011 edition of Proctor.

Staff changes at QPILCH

- HPLC coordinator **Cristy Dieckmann** is leaving QPILCH to commence work as Director of the Youth Advocacy Centre for 12 months. Cristy has worked in several positions at QPILCH since late 2006 and will be greatly missed. We wish Cristy all the best in her new role.
- HPLC Lawyer **Lauren Steele** is also leaving QPILCH to embark on a much-anticipated overseas working holiday. Lauren was initially employed as acting HPLC Coordinator and return has worked three days per week as HPLC Lawyer. Lauren's most recent efforts will come to fruition in the form of the Adventures Art Exhibition from 6 – 10 June 2011.
- **Ann-Margaret Herriot** is now Coordinator of Student Programs and is supervising four student clinics – the Administrative Law Clinic, Mental Health Law Clinic, Public Interest Research Clinic and Public Interest Lawyering Clinic. Ann previously coordinated the QLS & Bar Pro Bono Referral Schemes.
- **Catherine Cocks** now co-ordinates the QLS & Bar Pro Bono Referral Scheme with the assistance of Andrea Perry-Petersen. Andrea's involvement allows Catherine to continue her work on the Rural, Regional & Remote Project.

Training

Homeless Persons Legal Clinic and Refugee Civil Law Clinic

The HPLC ran a free training day for homelessness and refugee support workers on Legal Basics on March 24. Over 50 workers from HPLC/RCLC host agencies and other homeless service agencies attended. The day was hosted and catered by the Commonwealth and Queensland Ombudsman offices. Speakers from Legal Aid Queensland (consumer law, family law, child protection units), Tenants Union of Qld, Qld Advocacy Inc, the Welfare Rights Centre, Special Circumstances Court, Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian volunteered their time and expertise. The training was greatly appreciated by the 'frontline' community workers who attended.

We have held the following legal education sessions for HPLC and RCLC lawyers:

- *The Queensland Dispute Resolution Centre* – hosted by **McCullough Robertson** in March 2011.
- *Workers Compensation QCOMP and the Return to Work Assist* – hosted by **Blake Dawson** in September 2010.

- *HPLC/RCLC Precedents and Procedures* –hosted by **HWL Ebsworth** in October 2010.
- *The State Ombudsman* – hosted by **Murphy Schmidt** in November 2010.

The next CLE will be on *tenancy issues* with Rose Brown from Tenants' Union of Queensland presenting. The CLE will be held on 12 April at **Clayton Utz**.

Self Representation Service

The training program for volunteers of the Self Representation Service at the Courts and QCAT has been enlivened to provide volunteers with an opportunity to attend training on a bi-monthly basis. Past and upcoming continuing legal education sessions include:

- *Assisting clients with anti-discrimination proceedings in QCAT* – presented by Senior Member Clare Endicott, hosted by **DibbsBarker** Lawyers in March 2011
- *Drafting Pleadings* – presented by Damien O'Brien of Counsel, hosted by **Allens Arthur Robinson** on 30 March 2011.
- *QCAT administrative review and appellate jurisdictions* – to be presented by Senior Member Richard Oliver and hosted by **Macrossans** Lawyers in May 2011
- *Ethical considerations for lawyers assisting self represented parties* – to be presented by Brian Bartley in July 2011.

Reports from QPILCH services and clinics

Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic and Refugee Civil Law Clinic

The HPLC has assisted 264 clients so far this financial year. 19 clients have been assisted through the RCLC in the same time frame. As usual the volunteers have worked hard to achieve some great results. Here is a handful:

- **Minter Ellison** assisted a client who had been picked up by police for some very old charges. **John Allen**, from our criminal law list, gave strategic and practical advice and the charges were eventually dropped. The client phoned QPILCH to say thank you for all the help. He said he was very happy and now he can move on with his life.
- **Freehills** volunteers were successful in having a client's debt waived. It was the volunteer's perseverance in continually following up the creditors which made this happen.
- **Blake Dawson** and **Murphy Schmidt** helped one client over a long period of time to make arrangements for him to collect belongings that had been held by police. The client has collected his belongings and said he appreciated the concern for his matter.

Our new Regional Support Coordinator for Townsville, Amy Ho, has started work.

Self Representation Service

Courts (District and Supreme Courts and Queensland Court of Appeal)

Since our last newsletter in December, the Courts Self Representation Service has opened 61 files (up from 43 in the same period last year) and conducted over 115 hours of appointments with our clients. Some of our notable success stories have been:

- A client was granted an extension of time in which to file proceedings to recover compensation for medical negligence. The Service assisted the client to draft her Application and Affidavit documents and also advised the client on the terms of an order proposed by the respondent.
- A client with a Supreme Court trial due to commence in March who had sustained some serious spinal injuries in an accident in January was able to obtain an adjournment of her trial to enable her to obtain treatment of her injuries. The Service assisted the client to draft her affidavit material and in making submissions to the Supreme Court for the granting of the adjournment.

The Service thanks Pro Bono Mediation Panel members **Ian Hanger QC, Janet Barnes** (with Shane Connor as co-mediator), **Alicia Hill** (Principal, McInnes Wilson) and **Michael Halliday** who have recently assisted in pro bono mediations.

The latest issue of the *Journal of Judicial Administration* has an article on our Self Representation Service that may interest members. The article is available [here](#) but only to Journal subscribers or by purchasing the article. QPILCH has been given approval to distribute the article to members, so please email contact@qpilch.org.au if you would like a copy. The Service has also recently produced two new factsheets dealing with Commencing Proceedings, and Drafting a Statement of Claim. These factsheets are available in the [Factsheets](#) section of the QPILCH website.

Since the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court has increased to \$150,000, we are working with several barristers with the approval of the Bar Council to establish a civil law “duty lawyer” scheme in the Brisbane Magistrates Court. It is hoped that this scheme will be supported by our member firms with the provision of junior staff to instruct counsel in magistrate court civil proceedings. This will be a good learning opportunity for young solicitors and barristers to obtain court experience.

We thank the SRS Reference Group members John Bond SC (Chair), Dr Joan Lawrence, Magistrate Trevor Morgan, Greg Mackay, Joanne Rennick and Professor Jeff Giddings for their great contribution to the work of the SRS.

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

To mark the 1st anniversary of the QCAT Service and thank our volunteers, the Service hosted an after-work event at Bleeding Heart Gallery on 3 February 2011. The event was well attended given many of our participating firms were affected by the floods. The Honourable Justice Alan Wilson, Her Honour Judge Fleur Kingham, and QCAT Member Patricia Hanly attended the event. We thank all those who were present on the night.

Since January this year, the QCAT Service has received a large number of applications and staffed an increasing number of appointments. Some recent success stories from the QCAT Service include:

- Offering detailed guardianship and administration advice to a client who was the victim of a crime and suffered an acquired brain injury. The Service assisted the client to apply to the Tribunal for a review of his administration arrangements, which included advice on completing the relevant QCAT Forms, a financial management plan and two corroborating affidavits. The client’s application was successful and the Tribunal ordered the Public Trustee be removed as his administrator. The client expressed his sincere thanks to the Service for the assistance provided.
- Assisting an intellectually disabled couple to review of a decision by the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) to significantly restrict their contact with their children. After providing several appointments and detailed written advice, the Service referred the matter to **Brian Cronin** of Counsel, who worked closely with QPILCH staff on the day of the final Tribunal hearing to negotiate an agreement between the couple and the Department which encompassed much more than the original review application had anticipated. The Department not only reversed its decision to decrease the couple’s contact with their children, but also agreed to change the contact location to a more appropriate venue, implement a clear process for rescheduling contact visits (if required), and consider the couple’s requests for special contact visits at upcoming family events.

The QCAT Service consistently receives positive feedback, including the following recent comment from a client: *“I am extremely grateful to the solicitor I saw for her comments and advice. I tried my best to follow her instructions and wish to report that the Tribunal Member actually commented that I’d done a good job and if everybody did what I’d done it would make her job so much easier.”*

Pro bono referral schemes

We have had a sharp increase in applications recently. We are now also starting to see more applications relating to the floods and cyclone, mainly from people whose insurance claims have been rejected. We continue to see most cases assessed for referral taken up by a member firm. However, in order to help clients when a matter is not taken up by a firm, QPILCH has become solicitor on the record in several recent cases. This is done only when a barrister has agreed to appear and with the approval of the management committee, as we are conscious of the resources required to conduct litigation.

Public Interest Referral Scheme

A sample of work done by members includes:

- **Holding Redlich** offered to assist a pensioner who we had been helping for some time through our self representation services. The man had been evicted from the family home which he believed was held on trust for him by his children. He is seeking to establish an equitable interest in the house.
- **BDO Kendalls** helped a HPLC client to do his tax return for 2007 after he had ongoing issues with the ATO.
- **Macrossans** provided solicitors with body corporate expertise to participate in a meeting with a local councillor and West End body corporate managers to provide information and discuss appropriate responses to the floods.
- **MurphySchmidt** assisted a client of the Townsville Community Legal Service in relation to a dispute the client was involved in with a law firm she engaged for an estates matter. Joanne Rennick, partner of MurphySchmidt, assisted the solicitor at the TCLS with a discrete aspect of the matter in which the solicitor did not have the relevant expertise.
- **Sparke Helmore** offered to advise a community legal centre on the best practice of implementing a new award for the centre's employees.
- **DLA Phillips Fox** is assisting a young woman with an intellectual disability who had photos of her giving birth put on the internet without her consent.
- **McCullough Robertson** is advising QPILCH about the best ways for national PILCH collaboration.
- **McInnes Wilson** assisted a not-for-profit organisation redraft its constitution.
- **P & E Law** provided assistance to a community school relating to the appeal of a Council development decision.
- **Sparke Helmore** is assisting Rainforest Rescue, a not-for-profit group which purchases one block of land each year in the Daintree as part of their rainforest conservation work. Sparke Helmore is providing conveyancing assistance in relation to their current purchase.
- **Mallesons Stephen Jaques** assisted a rural client in relation to a tenancy dispute. The client had complex issues of tenancy / breach of contract related to working as a caretaker on a remote property.
- **Dibbs Barker**, along with barristers **Gary Coveney & Ken Barlow SC** helped an elderly woman who had used all her assets to purchase a house with her daughter and son-in-law, who then evicted her from the house.
- **DibbsBarker** also worked with barrister **Nicholas Andreatidis** to represent an elderly client at a mediation to protect her interest in a property.
- **Gerald Byrne** is helping a man with an application to Fair Work Australia after he believes he was unfairly sacked.
- **Kelly McIntyre** is providing an advice to QPILCH to help us assist an Aboriginal woman who has concerns about the indigenous corporation of which she was a member.
- **Justin Carter** provided an advice to a refugee who was seeking review in the Federal Magistrates Court. Justin also offered to provide an advice to ATSIWLAS.

- **Damien O'Brien** is advising QPILCH about practice issues and the new national legal profession reforms.
- **Sarah Scott-Mackenzie** provided advice and reviewed a letter for a Sri Lankan man who is seeking asylum in Australia but has met various administrative and legal hurdles. Sarah reviewed the file at short notice and advised the client what would be required for a letter to the Minister.
- **Greg Smart** assisted a man who was severely affected by the Grantham floods and could no longer afford legal assistance to deal with a bankruptcy. Greg appeared in the Federal Magistrates Court for the client and as no firms were able to assist, QPILCH instructed him.
- **Lisa Stewart** assisted a not-for-profit organisation by providing legal advice on the legal risk and liability involved with altering their guidelines.
- **Matthew Jones** assisted a client to defend a debt recovery litigation claim. The client's second language is English and she would not have been able to draft court documents on her own. She was able to successfully defend the claim.

QLS and Bar Pro Bono Referral Schemes

- **Bruce Thomas Lawyers** is assisting an 81-year-old man with a claim for criminal compensation and common law damages. The applicant was the victim of a serious assault. Bruce Thomas Lawyers is also assisting an elderly man to recover monies which were lost as a result of his purchase of a business in regional Queensland.
- **Butler McDermott Lawyers** is assisting a woman from the Czech Republic to contest the administration of the wills of her aunt and cousin who died on the Gold Coast.
- **Matt Black** of Counsel is assisting a man with an appeal of a decision made by Centrelink to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal. The appeal relates to the applicant's entitlement to the Parenting Payment Single (PPS). Matt Black is also advising an elderly woman in relation to whether the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) has jurisdiction to hear and determine her claim against a local Council and a company that designed a water treatment plant that was constructed on her property.
- **Rob Stevenson** of **Australian Workplace Lawyers** has also been very generous with his time in giving discrete employment law advice.

Student clinics and volunteers

- The **UQ HPLC Student Clinic's** project for the year is to develop a limited civil law service for Offender Reintegration Support Service clients. ORSS is now managed by Mission Australia, and provides over 12 months of case-management for some prisoners exiting correctional centres, with a focus on securing housing and employment. In the first semester students will develop a highly systematised kit for lawyers, based on expected responses to the Legal Health Check questionnaire. The LHC will be completed by prisoners, with the help of the ORSS caseworkers. Semester two students will provide those legal services, trialling the "kit" under the supervision of HPLC staff. Students will attend HPLCs with the following firms this semester: **MurphySchmidt, Blake Dawson, McInnes Wilson, Holding Redlich, Mallesons, Minter Ellison and Freehills.**
- The **Public Interest Research Clinic** students from **UQ** are working on two projects this semester. One group is conducting research about the qualities and skills sought by the legal profession from new graduates. QPILCH will use this information in the development and improvement of its clinical legal education programs. The other group of students are conducting research into privacy issues arising from identity scanning by Brisbane nightclubs. We are hoping that this will be an ongoing project and form part of a suite of projects looking at privacy issues affecting young people.
- The **Public Interest Lawyering Clinic** students from **Griffith University** are working on a range of public interest casework files this semester including matters arising out of the Queensland

floods. The students are also working on a privacy project looking at the privacy policies of internet sites, which also particularly concerns young people.

- The **Mental Health Law Clinic** students from **UQ** are assisting clients with requests for information, applications for a review of ITO, false imprisonment claims and doing research on the use of ECT. The students have had a field trip to the Mental Health Court where they observed a hearing to determine the mental capacity of a man on attempted murder charges, as well as lunch time seminars with members of the profession.
- The **Administrative Law Clinic** from **Bond University** finished on April 8. The students worked on a wide range of files including migration, guardianship, licensing, discrimination, victim's compensation, licensing issues etc. We also had field trips to the AAT and QCAT and had lunch time seminars with a number of practitioners including QCAT Senior Member Claire Endicott, Barry Dunphy, partner Clayton Utz and Nitra Kidson of counsel. The next administrative law clinic starts on May 20.

Student volunteers at QPILCH this semester were Elspeth Lee, Emma Wilce, Scott Richardson, Amelia Jenner, Alexandra Young, Tara Caldwell, Larisa Filipovic, Acacia Burns, Marcus de Courtenay, Claire Tsui, Britt Abbott, Jannat Islam, Louise Dark, Richard Fernandes, Mitchell Houten, Mikhara Ramsing, Robin Taylor-Leech, Suki Bloom, Chris Templeton. Emma Treherne from QUT is doing a placement for an internship. Experienced volunteers included Tom Lyons, Suzanne Webcke, Michelle Dahl, Sally Mathews, Erin Thomas and John Jerrard, and we thank them for their time and very valuable assistance.

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Subscription and Feedback

To subscribe (free) or unsubscribe to "In the Public Interest", the newsletter of the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House Incorporated or for more information about any item in this newsletter, please send an e-mail to contact@qpilch.org.au or contact us on (07) 3846 6318.

What is QPILCH?

The Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House Incorporated (QPILCH) is an initiative of the legal profession to assist people who cannot obtain legal aid or afford private legal services in civil law cases. QPILCH draws on the resources of the wider legal profession - private firms, barristers, government, corporate lawyers, university law schools and works with other community based agencies to assist those who are the most disadvantaged and marginalised. In addition to public interest pro bono referrals, QPILCH manages the QLS and Bar pro bono schemes and operates direct services – the Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, Refugee Civil Law Clinic, Self Representation Service (Supreme and District Courts and QCAT), Administrative Law Clinic, Mental Health Law Clinic, and IP & Technology Law Clinic – with the support of its members. For details of our referral and direct services, criteria and procedures, see the QPILCH website at www.qpilch.org.au.

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