

Thursday 21st November 2019

For immediate release

**Re: Northern Community Legal Centre launches project to tackle the high rates of family violence in the Indian Community in the North West**

Northern Community Legal Centre (NCLC) is excited to announce the launch of “Family Violence in the Australian Indian Community Project”, supported by a grant from the Victorian Legal Services Board Grants Program.

*Jenni Smith CEO states “this project is the continuation of a journey which started in 2015, in the wake of the Coroners findings into the death of local Indian born woman Sargun Ragi. From that time, we worked hard to find ways of ensuring that Indian women could access the protections under the family violence system. In doing so we developed strong and enduring relationships with the South Asian communities of Melbourne’s North West. What became apparent was that many Indian women who were leaving their homeland for marriages to Indian men residing in Australia were particularly vulnerable to many forms of family violence. Our family violence lawyers were able to assist but were unable to tackle the immigration issues that made these women so particularly vulnerable”.*

The Indian Family Violence Project is a partnership with Oorja Foundation, a grassroots organisation supporting Indian communities in Melbourne. The project has enabled NCLC to recruit an Immigration Lawyer, to work alongside our existing team of Family Violence Lawyers to provide the wrap around legal support to Indian women who often have immigration issues that affect their safety and security and ability to access support.

The project aims to increase the support and safety for newly arrived Indian women experiencing family violence and identify gaps in the family violence service system and state and federal laws which add to their vulnerability.

For any media requests, please contact NCLC Communication Officer, Frankie Hanman Siegersma on (03) 9310 4376 or by email at [communications@northernclc.org.au](mailto:communications@northernclc.org.au)

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