

# Working Together For Advice Developing Discrimination Advice Workstream Strategy Paper 1 Developing Pilot Referral Networks



## Section 1: Introduction

This strategy paper makes recommendations for developing pilot referral networks in order to achieve the aims and outcomes of the Developing Discrimination Advice Workstream. It is split into the following four sections and two appendices:

- Section 1: Introduction (pp.1-2), starts by outlining the overall Working Together for Advice Project, and then moves on to establishing the main objectives of the Developing Discrimination Advice workstream in developing referral networks.
- Section 2: Mapping and research of existing referral networks (pp.3-7), summarises the findings of the mapping and research on discrimination advice referral networks and partnerships that have been undertaken by the workstream from September 2008 to March 2009.
- Section 3: Selecting pilot referral networks (pp.8-11,) uses the findings of the mapping and research to determine the strategic approach to developing pilot referral networks.
- Section 4: Evaluating the pilots and the workstream's pilot referral network strategy (pp.12-14), outlines how the pilot referral networks and the pilot referral network strategy will be evaluated.
- Appendix 1 (pp.15-26), shows the good practice case studies written up when researching referral networks and partnership working around discrimination advice.
- Appendix 2 (p.27) shows draft funding guidelines for the pilot referral networks.

### Background to the work

The Working Together for Advice is a multiple strand project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund. It provides a range of support services to advice organisations throughout England. The Advice Services Alliance is leading the project on behalf of a consortium comprising five of its member networks; AdviceUK, Age Concern England, Citizens Advice, Law Centres Federation and Youth Access.

The Developing Discrimination Advice workstream is one of eight Working Together for Advice workstreams. It is being led by the Law Centres Federation, and the Law Centres Federation, Citizens Advice and AdviceUK all have staff members dedicated to the workstream.

## Aim and outcomes of the pilot referral networks strategy

The overall aim of the Developing Discrimination Advice workstream is to develop the provision of discrimination advice. In order to meet this aim the workstream is developing two strategies, one focussed on developing pilot discrimination advice referral networks (this paper - Strategy Paper 1) and another focussed on developing pilot training and learning around discrimination advice issues (Strategy Paper 2). These two strategies are closely linked, and these links will be highlighted in both strategy papers.

The workstream's agreed outcomes are listed below, with an indication of how the pilot referral network strategy will meet each outcome. Outcomes d, e and f are especially relevant to this pilot referral networks strategy.

- (a) Increased availability of high quality discrimination advice.  
The pilot referral networks will encourage partnership working to make the best use of available resources for discrimination advice by sharing materials, expertise and skills.
- (b) Influence the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to create a workable national discrimination advice training strategy.  
The pilot referral networks will be supported to engage with and influence the EHRC at a regional level. The workstream will also work to influence the EHRC's approach to discrimination advice referral networks at a national level.
- (c) Increased confidence and skills for advisors in the sector.  
The pilot referral networks will be involved in the delivery of the workstream's training strategy, both as training participants and as training providers.
- (d) Ensuring clients don't fall through the net or are passed through the referral process incorrectly, leading to ineffective result.  
The pilot referral networks will aim to develop effective signposting and referral processes for clients with discrimination issues. They will also be supported to raise awareness of discrimination and discrimination advice provision with information level advisers and intermediaries.
- (e) Potential thousands of people experience discrimination are either enabled to solve their problems by gaining knowledge and confidence to take action, or are supported by the advisors' action.  
The pilot referral networks will be supported and encouraged to get involved in Public Legal Education and awareness raising activities. The workstream is developing a Public Legal Education strategy as part of its Training and Learning Strategy.
- (f) At least 1,700 frontline advice agencies will be empowered to reach further into our disadvantaged communities ensuring that 10% more people get the advice they need to turn their lives around.  
The pilot referral networks will be evaluated, and used to write good practice guidance for frontline advice agencies on developing and improving referral networks around discrimination advice. This guidance will be disseminated through the networks involved in the Working Together for Advice Project and more widely.

## Section 2: Mapping and research of existing referral networks

The Developing Discrimination Advice workstream has undertaken a number of activities to map and research existing referral networks and partnerships among advice organisations across England. Research activities have included a mapping questionnaire, regional focus groups and compiling good practice case studies.

### Mapping questionnaire

The workstream carried out mapping of discrimination advice services from September - November 2008. A mapping survey was sent to all AdviceUK member organisations, Citizens Advice Bureaux and Law Centres. The mapping surveys included questions on referrals and referral arrangements, partnership working, second tier support and awareness raising activities.

The overall mapping survey report also found that:

- There is considerable discrimination advice activity but ... there is minimal infrastructure to co-ordinate and support both capacity building activities such as training and second tier support or the delivery of advice and public legal education.

This shows that there is a need to support advice organisations to develop referral networks.

The overall mapping survey report made the following recommendations:

- There are existing patterns of second tier support and training that should be enhanced and built on through partnerships with existing agencies.
- Organisations need support to develop effective partnership and referral networks.
- Discrimination awareness activities should be co-ordinated and common materials developed. The opportunity to provide Public Legal Education materials including online and information leaflets should be explored.
- Agencies will face barriers in engaging in workstream activities if they are not also provided with support to achieve funding for their activities. This capacity building support should be built into the project milestones.

Further analysis of the mapping questionnaire findings, alongside other available relevant data, was undertaken by each funded network organisation (AdviceUK, Citizens Advice and Law Centres Federation) to get a clearer idea of referral systems and partnership working within their networks. This analysis was carried out on a regional basis (based on the 9 Government Office Regions) and looked to identify existing formal and informal referral systems, current partnership working, areas of potential cooperation and areas of referral deserts.

The overall findings of this analysis are:

- Organisations receiving EHRC casework funding provide the main bulk of discrimination advice across England, but this provision is patchy and erratic. There is no EHRC funded discrimination advice available in many areas and the services that the EHRC is funding are inconsistent – different organisations are funded to cover different areas of discrimination law and different geographical areas (e.g. region, county or town).
- None of the regions can be identified as having full and comprehensive discrimination advice provision. The regions with the most significant levels of discrimination advice provision are the East and London regions.
- The regions with the least discrimination advice provision are Yorkshire and Humber, East Midlands, North East and the South East.
- There are a number of advice organisations who provide discrimination advice at a national level. These national providers are mainly focussed on dealing with discrimination issues affecting specific groups of people, e.g. people with disabilities, children, LGBT people or refugees.
- Many of the organisations which do not have specifically funded discrimination advice services are only able to spend a limited time delivering discrimination advice (0-5 hours a week).
- Specialist provision mainly focuses on employment discrimination, although there are organisations which specialise in discrimination in Goods, Facilities and Services, education and housing.
- There are currently very few discrimination advice referral networks in existence across England. A few possible models of good practice were identified and explored further (see section on good practice case studies below).

### **Regional focus groups**

The workstream undertook a Training Needs Analysis which included holding seven regional focus groups around the country in October and November 2008. The final session of each regional focus group looked at good practice around partnership working. For this session the regional focus group participants were split into smaller groups, comprising organisations that worked locally to each other, and invited, “to consider the services that each organisation represented delivers in discrimination advice and how they work together or how they could work together more effectively”.

The Training Needs Analysis Report found the following:

“Substantial existing partnership and referral links were identified in Luton, the East Midlands and Bristol. The North East and South East regional focus groups suggested that there is currently very little partnership working going on in those regions. In London there seems to be localised pockets of partnership working, e.g. Tower Hamlets advice organisations use a referral system based on Nell Booker, but very little consistency across the whole region. At the Yorkshire & Humber and North West regional focus group barriers to partnership

working were identified – competition for the same funding, lack of funding for services and different catchment areas can make it difficult to share resources and effective referral systems.

Comments on the evaluation sheets showed that many participants found it useful to meet people from other advice organisations in their region at the focus groups. One of the main learning points that people noted from the focus groups was around the importance of developing partnerships and networking.”

### **Good practice case studies**

A number of good practice referral network/ partnership case studies have been researched and written up by the workstream in order to inform its strategy. The case studies are listed below by region and are available in Appendix 1 of this Strategy Paper.

#### **East**

- Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial equality (ISCRE) – outreach discrimination advice in Lowestoft, providing accessible services in a rural area

#### **East Midlands**

- Coventry University Students’ Unions Advice Centre and the Coventry Hate Crime Reporting Network

#### **London**

- Greenwich Advice Network – a network that is co-ordinated by Greenwich Council.

#### **North East**

- Northumberland Advice Network – an informal network consisting of advice providers at all levels who were previously members of the local CLSP (Community Legal Strategic Partnership).

#### **South West**

- Avon and Bristol Advice Partnership – a partnership of 19 advice organisations.

#### **Yorkshire and Humber**

- Kirklees – a semi formal partnership between Kirklees Law Centre, CHAS Housing Advice Service and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

#### **Wales**

- Newport Citizens Advice Bureau – developing discrimination advice across South Wales.

#### **West Midlands**

- ELGAR – a Birmingham based group for employment law practitioners providing networking meetings and training opportunities

## Mapping and research conclusions

Five models of discrimination advice referral networks can be identified from the mapping and research. They are largely aimed at facilitating referrals between advice agencies towards specialist advice, and are often led by specialist advice providers.

### **1) Established formal discrimination advice referral processes**

These are referral processes where agencies have entered into formal agreements in terms of referral of discrimination cases from agency to agency. We have not found many examples of this type of network currently in existence. Coventry Hate Crime Reporting Network is an example that focuses on a specific area of discrimination advice. A formal referral network for discrimination advice is currently being formed in the East Midlands and Kirklees.

### **2) Established informal discrimination advice referral processes**

Many referral systems are built through contact between key individuals, who then start to refer clients to each other. They do not formalise their referral links and trust in the quality of the service to be received by clients is essential in this type of referral system. We have found a few examples of this type of referral network, including Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality's outreach in Lowestoft, links between Luton Law Centre and Luton Rights, and Greenwich Advice Network.

### **3) Formal referral processes outside of discrimination advice**

This involves formal referral processes between agencies but not on discrimination advice. There are examples where the referral system facilitates informal referral mechanisms on discrimination advice and it may be possible to adapt the formal referral processes to cover discrimination advice. The Avon Centre for Advice network in Bristol is an example of this type of formal referral process.

### **4) Potential for developing referral systems**

There are a number of areas where there is potential for developing informal or formal referral networks around discrimination advice. This potential is largely dependent on whether there are a number of discrimination advice providers at information, generalist or specialist level working in the same area. Examples of these potential referral systems were seen at the regional focus groups where organisations started exploring the benefits of working together.

### **5) Discrimination advice referral 'deserts'**

There are some areas where there is very little discrimination advice provision and very few advice organisations who could work together to form a referral network. Many parts of the South East region, in particular, seem to fit this model. It covers a large geographical area, partially split by London, with very few discrimination advice providers covering the same catchment area.

These five referral network models will be utilised and developed in the following way by this strategy:

- Networks that fit into models 1 and 2 provide good practice examples for discrimination advice. Referral networks that fit into model 3 may also offer some learning and examples that are relevant to discrimination advice.
- Models 3 and 4 offer the most potential in terms of developing new effective referral networks, and should be used to identify the pilot referral network areas.
- Model 5 areas are currently not a priority, as it may be impossible to create referral networks in areas where there are so few discrimination advice providers and the workstream is working within a restricted timescale.

## Section 3: Selecting pilot referral network areas

The Working Together for Advice project runs until the end of September 2010. By the end of the project, the workstream will aim to have directly worked with and developed six pilot referral networks.

The workstream's budget for developing pilot referral networks is £30,000 in total (£20,000 in Year 2 and £10,000 in Year 3). Each pilot referral network will be allocated £5,000 from this budget and will be given guidelines as to how the money can be spent and what they need to produce and achieve in return (see Appendix 2 for draft funding guidelines).

Most of the workstream's work around developing discrimination advice referral networks will focus on developing pilot referral networks. However, it is important to note that some developments of discrimination advice referral networks may also occur as a result of the workstream's training and learning strategy, and in particular the regional forums that are planned as part of this strategy. Training and learning events that bring discrimination advice providers together can lead to networking and joint working. This has already been proven by the workstream's regional focus groups. The workstream will make an effort to encourage the forming of these links at training and learning events, and will also aim to record and measure them where they occur.

In its six pilot areas, the workstream will focus on developing referral networks that currently fit into Model 3 or 4 from the five models outlined above. In order to ensure that the pilots are as diverse, representative and relevant as possible, consideration should also be given to the following factors in the selection of pilot areas:

Geographical considerations:

- Urban/ rural – the workstream will need to ensure that it is are working in both urban and rural areas
- Local/ regional/ national – some referral networks could be developed on a local level (e.g. county wide), while others could be developed at regional or national level. It would be good to have pilots working at each of these levels.
- An even spread across England – there is a need to ensure that the workstream is working across the country, so each pilot should be based in a different region and the regions that the workstream is working in should be spread across the country.

Advice provision considerations:

- Each pilot area will need a number of advice organisations involved in the delivery of discrimination advice which are willing to work together to develop and improve access to high quality, appropriate discrimination advice.
- The advice organisations involved in the pilots need to be committed to the principles of equality and diversity in the delivery of their advice services.

- The pilots need to include a good spread of discrimination advice providers at information, generalist or specialist level.
- The pilots need to include organisations which cover all the areas of discrimination advice, employment, good facilities and services, education, housing and public functions.
- The pilots should include organisations that work with a diverse range of different client groups, and include some organisations that work with a specific group who are affected by discrimination.

Sustainability considerations:

- Consideration should be given to the sustainability of the pilot referral networks that are being established. The workstream needs to work in areas and with organisations which have on-going funding for discrimination advice through Local Authority or Legal Services Commission funding, or a good chance of receiving future casework funding from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- A lead agency will need to be easily identifiable in each pilot area, with the capacity and ability to run the pilot network, collect and maintain records as requested by the workstream and liaise with the workstream development worker for at least a year.

In order to manage the workload, the workstream will carry out the work with pilot referral networks in two phases.

- Phase 1 – three pilot referral networks will be selected in April 2009. Work with these pilots will begin by the end of April 2009 and continue for at least a year.
- Phase 2 – three further pilot referral networks will be selected. Work with these pilots will begin by the end of September 2009 and will continue for at least 10 months.

On the basis of the mapping and research findings and the other considerations, the following priority areas for pilot referral networks have been identified for Phase 1.

**Phase 1**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>	<b>Categorisation</b>	<b>Lead person</b>
East Midlands (may also cover West Midlands and some parts of Yorkshire and Humber)	East Midlands	Leicester Money Advice (TBC)	Potential/Urban/Regional	SN
North East	Northumberland and	Alnwick CAB	Potential/Rural/Local	BF
South West	Bristol	Avon and Bristol Law Centre	Existing/Urban/Local	FW

Thought is already being given to possible Phase 2 pilot referral networks and information is being disseminated seeking expressions of interest from agencies to participate. Potential areas include: North West, South, East, Yorks and Humber, and London.

## What will the pilot referral networks aim to achieve?

### **Aim of the pilots:**

To develop local or regional networks which enable advice organisations to develop and improve access to high quality, appropriate discrimination advice.

### **Objectives of the pilots:**

1. To improve access to discrimination advice in the pilot area by developing more effective signposting and referrals for clients with discrimination advice issues.
2. To improve the quality of discrimination advice in the pilot area by providing training, materials and resources to advice organisations and advisers.
3. To increase the impact of discrimination advice in the pilot area by supporting advice organisations and advisers to share resources, skills and experiences and encouraging organisations to work together on relevant social policy issues.
4. To raise awareness of rights and discrimination advice in the pilot area by engaging in awareness raising and public legal education initiatives.
5. To engage with the relevant regional team within the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and encourage their ongoing support and involvement in the pilot network.

Objectives 2 and 4 will link into the workstream's training and learning strategy.

## What support will the workstream offer the pilot referral networks?

Each pilot network will be assigned a worker from the workstream who will be able to offer ongoing development support to the pilot network for up to a year. The development support provided will depend on the needs of each pilot but could include:

- Help to set up the network.
- Help with forward planning for the network.
- Help to organise meeting agendas and arrange speakers/ trainers.
- Help to engage with the regional EHRC team and other regional bodies like the regional equality networks.
- Provision of training, materials and resources to the pilot network.
- Provision of limited financial support to cover the costs of the pilot networks.

## Section 4: Evaluating the pilots and the workstream's pilot referral network strategy

Effective evaluation of the pilot referral networks and the workstream's referral network strategy is essential to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

### How will the pilot referral networks be evaluated?

Each pilot referral network will be expected to meet the following requirements in order to enable the workstream to monitor and evaluate its progress and effectiveness against the five pilot objectives listed above. The lead agency of each pilot will be responsible for ensuring that these requirements are met.

- Each network will be expected to agree Terms of Reference, workplan and budget with the first 3 months of the start of the pilot.
  - Each network will be expected to hold at least 4 network meetings during the course of the pilot.
- 1) Effective signposting and referrals.
    - Monitoring information on discrimination advice provided and the numbers and effectiveness of signposting or referrals on discrimination advice issues from each organisation involved in the network – to be collected at the start and at the end of the pilots. A template form for collecting this information will be devised by the workstream.
    - Agreed signposting and referral protocols or guidelines - covering issues like when to signpost clients and when to refer, what information needs to be passed on by the referring agency, template forms, etc.
    - At least 3 case studies written up by the end of the pilot which show the effectiveness of the network's signposting and referral systems and, if possible, the outcome for the clients.
  - 2) Provision of training, materials and resources.
    - Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and the impact of any training or learning delivered by the referral network. If this training or learning is being delivered as part of the workstream's training and learning strategy, the network will be expected to comply with the monitoring evaluation guidelines outlined in Strategy Paper 2.
  - 3) Sharing resources, skills and experiences and working together on social policy issues.
    - Towards the end of the pilot each network will be asked to produce a report showing the way in which they have worked together to share resources, skills and experiences and detailing the social policy work that they have undertaken. The workstream will produce a template for this report.
  - 4) Awareness raising and public legal education (PLE).
    - Each pilot will be expected to undertake at least one awareness raising or PLE activity. Towards the end of the pilot each network will be asked to produce a report detailing and evaluating the awareness raising and public legal work that they have undertaken. The workstream will produce a template for this report. Further

recommendations as to how public legal education work should be undertaken and evaluated by the pilots will be outlined in Strategy Paper 2.

5) Engaging with the EHRC

- Towards the end of each pilot each network will be asked to write a sustainability plan, including details of links with the regional EHRC team and any other regional bodies. The workstream will produce a template for this plan.

The workstream will produce good practice guidance on developing discrimination advice referral networks based on the experiences of the pilot referral networks. This good practice guidance may take the form of a toolkit, with different sections aimed at different types of networks. This good practice guidance will be disseminated across the networks in the Working Together for Advice Project and to other relevant organisations. The workstream will look to engage with the EHRC in the development of this good practice guidance.

### Evaluating the Pilot Referral Network Strategy

The workstream's work on developing referral networks will be evaluated against the workstream's overall outcomes at the end of the project. The guide below shows on how the pilot referral network strategy will be measured against these outcomes. Consideration will also be given to any developments of referral networks achieved through the Training and Learning Strategy and regional forums. (Please note: Strategy paper 2 will detail how the workstream's Training and Learning Strategy work to meet the outcomes, especially outcomes a, b and c which are especially relevant to training and learning.)

(a) Increased availability of high quality discrimination advice.

This outcome will be evaluated by examining how the pilot referral networks worked to make the best use of available resources for discrimination advice by sharing materials, expertise and skills.

(b) Influence the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to create a workable national discrimination advice training strategy.

This outcome will be measured by examining the effectiveness of the pilot referral network's engagement with the EHRC regional teams, and the effectiveness of the workstream's engagement with the EHRC at a national level.

(c) Increased confidence and skills for advisors in the sector.

This outcome will be measured by looking at the evaluation of the impact of any training undertaken by the pilots or the workstream.

(d) Ensuring clients don't fall through the net or are passed through the referral process incorrectly, leading to ineffective result.

This outcome will be measured by examining the monitoring from the pilot referral networks around signposting and referrals, and through an evaluation of the pilot's signposting and referral protocols and case studies.

- (e) Potential thousands of people experience discrimination are either enabled to solve their problems by gaining knowledge and confidence to take action, or are supported by the advisors' action.

This outcome will be measured by examining the evaluation report of the PLE initiatives undertaken by each pilot referral network. The number of clients being supported by organisations involved in the pilots will also be examined.

- (f) At least 1,700 frontline advice agencies will be empowered to reach further into our disadvantaged communities ensuring that 10% more people get the advice they need to turn their lives around.

The good practice guidance or toolkit on developed discrimination advice referral networks will be evaluated through a simple questionnaire which will be sent to all guidance recipients.

## Conclusion

This paper outlines the Developing Discrimination Advice Workstream's to developing and evaluating pilot referral networks. It is a working document and can be updated with the agreement of all the workstream partners at any time.

## Appendix A

### Good Practice Case Studies

#### East

#### **Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE)**

#### **Outreach discrimination advice in Lowestoft**

#### **Providing accessible services in a rural area**

#### **About ISCRE**

ISCRE has been working towards the elimination of racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations across Suffolk since 1977.

ISCRE offer free, confidential legal advice and representation to anyone experiencing discrimination in Suffolk in employment, accessing services or by Police and the courts. Their legal advice service now works across all equality strands, though the majority of their cases still involve race discrimination.

Alongside their legal advice services, ISCRE also provide translation and interpreting services, and diversity training and consultancy.

ISCRE are a member organisation of AdviceUK.

#### **Why is outreach important?**

Suffolk is a rural county with a population of around 700,000. ISCRE is based in the south of the county in Ipswich, the largest town in Suffolk. Suffolk is a large county, around 60 miles in width. It is mainly rural, with a few medium-sized towns serving big hinterlands. ISCRE is the only not-for-profit organisation offering specialist discrimination advice in the whole of Suffolk.

In order to make its advice services accessible to people in north Suffolk, ISCRE recognised the need to establish outreach advice services. They were awarded funding for discrimination casework services by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2008, which made setting up outreach services a priority.

#### **Partnership working in Lowestoft**

The town of Lowestoft is over 45 miles from Ipswich, in the north-eastern corner of Suffolk. The black and minority ethnic population of Lowestoft are mostly Portuguese or East European people who have come to the area to work in food processing factories. There is also a small Bangladeshi community and some Indian students who are attending Lowestoft College.

Since September 2008, ISCRE has been working in partnership with Lowestoft International Support Group (LISG) to provide an outreach discrimination advice service. LISG is a small voluntary organisation working to support international residents in Lowestoft. ISCRE and LISG have built up

a very positive relationship following discussions between the Directors of the respective organisations over community issues.

LISG provides the outreach venue free of charge, and makes referrals to the discrimination advice service. It is an informal partnership, with no service level agreement or money changing hands. Instead, it's a relationship built on mutual trust, respect and the desire to do the best for clients. The contact between the two organisations is maintained by regular informal discussion between staff.

The outreach discrimination advice service has been advertised throughout Lowestoft, with posters being sent to other voluntary organisations in the area.

### **The outreach discrimination advice service**

ISCRE's outreach service in Lowestoft provides the same casework service as clients receive if they visit the main office in Ipswich. If a client needs further advice after the initial interview at the outreach service, it is offered through a mixture of telephone and/or email contact, with further appointments if necessary.

The outreach service runs once a fortnight, alternately on Wednesday between 10am-12pm, and Thursday between 4-6pm. It is hoped that the two different day/time slots each fortnight improves access to the service. ISCRE employs two legal caseworkers, who share the responsibility of staffing the outreach.

The outreach is mainly an appointment based service. Many of the referrals are currently being made by LISG, the host organisation. ISCRE have devised a simple referral form for LISG staff and volunteers to complete with basic client details. LISG then email the referral forms to ISCRE in advance of each session with the appointment details. The ISCRE caseworkers, however, are currently able to take a fluid approach to the appointment system. If a client drops-in to the outreach session without an appointment, they are still seen by the adviser. At present, they are seeing 1 or 2 clients at every session, and in a two-hour session two clients is probably the maximum.

Through its own in-house interpreting service, ISCRE are able to provide interpreters for clients at the outreach sessions when they are informed of language needs in advance.

### **Clients and cases**

Of the enquiries that come to the outreach service, around one-third to a half are followed up by casework. Most of the clients that currently use the outreach service have race discrimination in employment enquiries. The service does cover all equality strands and goods, facilities and services, but these cases are proving harder to attract.

Many of the clients at the outreach service are temporary or contract workers, with little security of employment. The current financial crisis is definitely

having an effect of this client group. They are often the first to be laid off and there are cases where workers have not been paid for the work they have already done (and there is an overlap between exploitation and race discrimination).

Evaluation of the casework is undertaken on an ongoing basis in accordance with ISCRE's casework policy. LISG advice workers are members of and have close links with the communities in Lowestoft and provide regular feedback regarding the perceptions of clients.

### **Case Studies**

One Asian client came to the Outreach because he had not been shortlisted for a job with a large employer for which he met all the specifications. ISCRE supported him in his grievance. This resulted in the employer investigating and finding significant errors in the recruitment process. The staff concerned in recruiting had drawn up a shortlist of one person who had close ties with one of the recruiters. The employer then restarted the recruitment process using new staff and re-ran the short listing process which resulted in our client being invited for interview.

Another Polish client came to the outreach service after a mobile telephone provider had changed his contract package without his agreement. This had followed a telephone call from the company which he had not understood due to language difficulties. He tried to get the company to reinstate the old package. They refused. After our intervention they agreed to reinstate the old contract.

### **The cost of outreach**

Providing an outreach service of this type is very costly and resource intensive. The time it takes for advisers to travel to Lowestoft uses up valuable resources, and there is always the risk that clients will not turn up for their appointment. ISCRE's approach remains as flexible as possible in order to make the best use of resources. For example, when a client did not turn up for an appointment that involved an adviser and an interpreter, an impromptu home visit was arranged instead.

The outreach has led to an increase in the awareness of ISCRE's services in the Lowestoft area. Audrey Ludwig, Discrimination Adviser at ISCRE, has noted that providing and advertising the outreach service has improved ISCRE's relationships with other community groups in Lowestoft. Other initiatives are growing out of these improved relationships, for example, Audrey is due to provide a training course to Lowestoft DIAL (Disability Information and Advice Line) in March 2009.

### **Developing outreach services further**

For ISCRE, outreach services are crucial and the only way of working to provide an accessible service throughout Suffolk. ISCRE are currently further improving their services in the north of the country by setting up another outreach service at Brandon, a town in the north-west of Suffolk, at the offices of Brandon and Mildenhall CAB.

## East Midlands

### **Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre and the Coventry Hate Crime Reporting Network**

AdviceUK member, Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre has been part of the Coventry Hate Crime Reporting Network for around three years. They were asked to join the network by Coventry City Council as they had become involved in reporting incidents of hate crime to the police.

#### **What is the Coventry Hate Crime Reporting Network and how does it work?**

There are currently twenty-two Hate Crime Reporting Centres located throughout the City of Coventry. The reporting centres include voluntary organisations, housing offices and housing associations and neighbourhood management council offices. The Network is coordinated by Hate Crime Reduction Officer at the Coventry City Council. The Council is continually looking to expand the network of reporting centres by identifying and inviting relevant organisations to get involved.

Coventry City Council has produced a leaflet called 'Reporting Hate Crime in Coventry' which explains what a hate crime is, where the reporting centres are and what support the network can offer. Hard copies of this leaflet are disseminated throughout Coventry and it is also available as a download from their website.

The leaflet defines hate crime as, "motivated by prejudice against someone's sex, racial heritage, religion, disability or sexual orientation. It can include graffiti, offensive mail, assault, verbal abuse or offensive literature."

The Network has an online hate crime reporting form on the Coventry City Council website. The reporting form can be filled in by individuals or by the hate crime reporting centres on behalf of their client. The client can choose whether they want a multi-agency follow up to the incident, if they want no further action to be taken, or if they want someone to contact them with more information about their options. The form can also be used by the reporting centres to report hate crimes anonymously.

If the client has indicated that they want a multi-agency response to the crime their details will be shared with the Police and Victim Support. Coventry City Council will also consider whether there is additional support that they can provide in the form of safety equipment and coordinating services. When Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre reports incidences of hate crime they will also often remain involved and carry on supporting the student.

#### **What else does the Network do?**

The Network meets every two months and meetings are hosted by the Council. At the meetings the network members discuss any evident or

emerging themes in the types of hate crimes being reported throughout the city. For example, if there has been any rise in incidents within any newly arrived communities or if there has been a rise in incidents being reported around disability, race or sexual orientation. The meetings also give network members a chance to discuss issues regarding the police handling of hate crimes and other social policy issues. For example, at the meetings, Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre regularly challenges the fact that prostitutes are not covered by the network's definition of hate crime, having identified them as an extremely vulnerable group in the city. The meetings also give network members a chance to discuss hate crime initiatives and campaigns that they are planning.

The Network feeds into Coventry City Council's Scrutiny Board. Caron McKenna from Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre attends quarterly Scrutiny Board meetings, at which feedback and monitoring from the Hate Crime Reporting Network is considered.

### **How is Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre supported by the Network?**

The Council provides the Hate Crime Reporting Centres with free on-going support and training. At Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre they are constantly training new officers on how to identify, report and deal with hate crime. The Network also provides support for hate crime awareness campaigns. For example, the Council's Hate Crime Reduction Officer recently gave a talk to the Sports and Societies network within Coventry University. Caron at the Advice Centre feels that such initiatives are successful because they actually make people think about their behaviour and how it may be offensive to others.

Being part of the Network has also helped Coventry University maintain an equal opportunities approach. Recently, when a group of students tried to challenge the University's policy on not allowing the BNP a platform, the University successfully argued that allowing the BNP a platform would conflict with their Hate Crime policy.

Being part of the Hate Crime Reporting Network has been a positive experience for Coventry University Students' Union Advice Centre. It has enabled the Advice Centre to improve the services it offers to students victims of hate crime and has increased the work it does around hate crime prevention.

## London

### **Greenwich Advice Network**

Largely remnant from old CLSP. Meetings held monthly. Co-ordinated by Greenwich Council.

Members are:

Greenwich CAB

Greenwich Housing Rights

Greenwich Community Law Centre

Plumstead Law Centre

Meridian Money Advice

Greenwich Racial Equality Council

Greenwich Council produced information leaflet for public on where to get advice in Greenwich. There is also a referral form used by all agencies developed by old CLSP. No electronic referral system members not keen on electronic referral system as they believe e-referral systems not most effective way to manage referrals. For example, it was noted that online diary management system for referrals do not take account of workload / Annual leave and other absences.

It is worth noting that the main driver for this Network is Greenwich Housing Rights and the contact person responsible is leaving the organisation in April 2009. There is no guarantee or evidence that the momentum for this network will continue once the contact person at Greenwich leaves in April 2009.

## North East

### **Northumberland Advice network**

The Northumberland Advice Network is an informal network consisting of advice providers across levels who were previously members of the local CLSP. The motivation for setting up this network is the introduction of CLACs and CLANs but also, members feel the partnership would help improve access to advice services for clients in Northumberland. There are plans to formalise the partnership.

Original purpose of the network was to identify the gaps in service provision within Northumberland to fill such gaps.

Members include: 6 CABx in Northumberland, Dawn Advice Ltd (AUK member), Private practice Solicitors with LSC contracts, Local Authority, One-to-One (fuel poverty organisation), Local Area Partnership and Northumberland Strategic Partnership members.

At the present time, Alnwick CAB could be said to be the “drive” for this Network including organising meetings to bring the agencies together.

Regional EHRC funding to build capacity of 6 CABx in Northumberland to deliver discrimination advice across the county. The training programme is contracted out to Newcastle Law Centre and includes peripatetic 2nd tier support to CABx workers.

## South West

### Avon & Bristol Advice Partnership

Bristol Law Centre was awarded some grants under the BLF Advice Plus bid to improve access to advice and legal services. (this of course would include discrimination advice). A partnership of 19 advice organisations will develop sustainable advice services that meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities.

Avon and Bristol partnership have a specific discrimination focused referral arrangement between: Bristol CAB, REC, SARI (Support Against Racist Incidents) and ACFA (Advice Centres for Avon).

ACFA comprises smaller community centres across Avon.

The partnership does not hold formal meetings of its own at the present time but do have meetings periodically with Equality South West. The Bristol Law Centre has had meetings with SARI to talk specifically about how referral between the two agencies could be improved.

The organisations support clients and do not give legal advice. If client wants to take legal action, the client is passed to the Law Centre.

## Yorkshire and Humber Kirklees

Semi Formal Partnership between Kirklees Law Centre, CHAS Housing Advice Service and 2 CABx (North & South Kirklees).

These organisations will share premises from 2009 with plans to bid as a consortium to the LSC in 2010.

One of the main objectives of the partnership is to establish tighter referral system as referral at the moment is rather “chaotic”. Employment Team at Kirklees Law Centre carry out outreach sessions at the CAB and the CAB refer cases to Kirklees Law Centre.

The Network is considering numerous online referral systems such as NELLBOOKER and Refernet. At the present time, Refernet is most preferred.

The general feeling about referral is that, although it’s not too bad, but things could be improved better. They would not say the current referral arrangement was good practice.

Though Kirklees Law Centre has EHRC casework grant, it is clear from conversations with the Law Centre Manager that meeting LSC contract requirement is the prime motive for the Law Centre’s activities. Kirklees Law Centre has recently moved in with the CAB whilst renovation work is carried out on the premises which I believe the network will share from April 2009.

## Wales

### Newport CAB

Newport CAB has regular contact with all CABx in the south of Wales. (14 CABx). Newport CAB hold outreach sessions at the following CABx: Blaenau, Gwent, Caerphilly, Meath and Ponty Pridd. Casework appointments are offered at those centres every fortnight.

Provides training on how to diagnose discrimination to CABx workers. There is a good referral links with Monmouth CAB. This is provided to all workers and volunteers at the CAB.

Also provides 2<sup>nd</sup> tier services to all CABx e.g. To check if a case is discrimination or not. i.e. the discrimination test.

Teach workers to ask appropriate questions during interviewing of clients.

They have developed materials on how to diagnose discrimination advice including for GFS cases.

Recently increased level of referrals from centres have exceeded their LSC contract level as well as for their EHRC contract was achieved within 9 months.

## West Midlands

### ELGAR

**A Birmingham based group for employment law practitioners providing networking meetings and training opportunities**

#### **Background of partnership**

ELGAR is the Birmingham Employment Law Group Advisers and Representatives. It is a group of employment law practitioners, and includes representatives from local independent advice organisations, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Law Centres, the College of Law, BRADICAL (a Birmingham-based group of discrimination adviser volunteers) and local law firms. People attend the group from organisations in Birmingham and its surrounding areas. It includes representatives from Coventry Law Centre and Warwickshire Employment Rights.

ELGAR was started between 10 and 15 years ago and was originally an initiative of Birmingham Citizens Advice Bureau and Birmingham TUC Centre for the Unemployed, an AdviceUK member organisation.

ELGAR does not receive any funding, and is run entirely by voluntary/ pro bono commitment. It is currently chaired by Andrew Lee, an active employment caseworker volunteer who previously worked for the Commission for Racial Equality. Coventry Law Centre is currently providing secretarial support for the network.

#### **What does ELGAR do?**

ELGAR meets every 3 months. In the early days the Commission for Racial Equality provided a room and lunch for the meetings. Now the ELGAR meetings are usually hosted by one of the local employment law firms – Anthony Collins, Shakespeares or Owen and Mitchell. Meetings start with lunch at 1pm and run to 3pm. There is usually one speaker at each meeting. The remainder of the meetings are dedicated to sharing information, discussing difficult cases and recent successes.

Around 30 people are on the ELGAR mailing list, and there are usually between 12 -20 people at each meeting.

#### **How does ELGAR link into local employment discrimination advice provision?**

By providing a regular space for people involved in employment advice in Birmingham and its surrounding areas to meet and share ideas, ELGAR has also led to the formation of an informal referral network. There are no official forms or paperwork, but ELGAR members are aware of the work of each other's organisations and services, and phone each other to refer clients. It is a referral network that is built on personal relationships and trust.

Birmingham Law Centre, Saltley and Nechells Law Centre and Coventry Law Centre are ELGAR members who receive some funding to provide employment discrimination advice. However, much of the employment advice provided by the ELGAR group members is provided by volunteers. Demand

for advice on employment discrimination issues in Birmingham and its surrounding area, far outstrips the current supply and there are a huge number of people who cannot get advice when they need it. In response to this gap in services, a number of voluntary initiatives have been developed, many by people and organisations involved in ELGAR.

Birmingham TUC Centre for the Unemployed has developed a link with the College of Law at the University of Birmingham. The College of Law has recruited around 30 student volunteers who provide advice on employment matters, including discrimination, to clients of the TUC Centre. Also, each Monday a team of experienced employment and employment discrimination volunteer advisers is based at the TUC Centre. This voluntary service can give initial advice, read and help a client understand relevant papers and assist in drafting grievances and ET1s. The volunteer adviser will check whether the client has access to other legal help, by looking at the client's insurance policies to see if they have access funding for a solicitor and checking for union membership. If a client has a good case and has no access to any alternative legal advice, the volunteer team will provide representation where possible. Recent successes have included £9,000 which was recently won for a Polish couple.

ELGAR has provided a base from which an informal network and partnerships have grown and developed. Its success highlights the importance of bringing people involved in employment discrimination issues together on a regular basis, so that they can share ideas, resources and get to know each other.

## Appendix 2

### Draft funding guidelines for pilot referral networks

- Each pilot referral network lead agency will be allocated a budget of £5,000.
- Each pilot referral network is expected to produce a workplan including a budget showing how the £5,000 is going to be spent during its first 3 months.
- The £5,000 will be paid to the referral pilot lead agency within a month of this workplan and budget being approved by the workstream.
- The pilot lead agency is required to keep invoices and receipts for all items paid for from the £5,000 and is expected to report any changes in the budget agreed and actual spending to their workstream development worker as soon as it becomes apparent.
- The workstream reserves the right to ask for copies of this proof of spending at any time during the pilot and up to three years after the pilot has ended.

The £5,000 can be spent on any of the following items associated with the pilot referral networks activities.

- Administrative costs of the lead agency
- Administrative costs of other organizations within the network, if working on a task delegated by the lead agency.
- Venue hire.
- Refreshments.
- Travel expenses for participants.
- Training costs.
- Publication costs/ cost of materials.
- Costs of running public legal education initiatives.

If the lead agency wants to spend any of the £5,000 budget on any item not listed above they should consult with their workstream development worker when putting together their pilot referral network budget.