

## Better Service Delivery Program

Many of you will already be well aware of the Better Service Delivery Program (BSDP), which in the past 6 months has rolled out over 1500 PCs and printers to the NGO sector in preparation for an online directory of registered NSW human services and a system of electronic referral. The BSDP is a state-wide, non-profit initiative promoting better coordination and information exchange between human service agencies and NGOs, locally and across NSW.

NCOSS are involved in implementing the Program and advise that so far there is only access to HSNet, a secure network which provides information specifically relevant to the Human Service sector. It provides an online discussion forum that currently has over 100 sub-forums running on various topics. There is also a facility for posting documents publicly or privately, as well as free access to the Welfare Rights Handbook.

BSDP promises the benefits of a streamlined approach to information sharing and client referral across government and non-government agencies. As well as the eight NSW Government departments, there are at least 5,000 non-government organisations providing human services in NSW. It is estimated that 6 million client referrals are made between these organisations every year.

A common approach to making referrals for clients is expected to improve coordination between organisations and to reduce the number of multiple client assessments. Therefore, a client who needs assistance from a number of organisations will be able to access the service system at any point. Their needs will be considered at initial contact and, with their consent, an electronic referral will be made to other agencies if required. The client will not have to fill out multiple forms and give basic information numerous times to different people to gain assistance. However, the client may need to provide more detailed information at different stages to ensure they get the right service to meet their needs.

The Human Services Network is at the centre of the Program and will provide a secure location for agencies to find information, share information and to send and receive referrals. The Network will provide access to ServiceLink, an online directory of NSW human services, and ReferralLink, a system of electronic referral. These applications, as well as the Client Management System, are still being developed and should be rolled out by early next year with relevant training available from approximately March 2005. The real success of this initiative is yet to be revealed but the setting up phase is well underway and we will no doubt be hearing the pros and cons of participating in the Network by the middle of next year.

Whilst there is no further funding available for hardware, NGOs can still register with BSDP if they have their own computer. If a NGO already has computers and internet services, it needs to register their service's domain name with NCOSS. This will allow the Program to ensure access to the Human Services Network quickly and easily. For more information visit: [www.ncoss.org.au](http://www.ncoss.org.au) or phone NCOSS on (02) 9211 2599. Once the NCOSS registration is completed, online registration is available at [www.hsnet.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hsnet.nsw.gov.au).