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April 16, 2002

Ms. Randi Youells
Vice President for Programs
Legal Services Corporation
750 First Street, NE, 11th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20002-4250

Re: Wyoming Self-Evaluation Report

Dear Ms. Youells:

Enclosed please find the Wyoming State Self-Evaluation report. Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Janet E. Millard
Director

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LSC Promoting Equal Access to Justice Throughout Wyoming
Major Funding Provided by the Legal Services Corporation, The Wyoming State Bar Foundation, and The Wyoming Dept. of Health, Aging Division

WYOMING SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

This report is being submitted in response to the Legal Service Corporation's directive that we evaluate the progress being made towards creation of a comprehensive, integrated client-centered legal services delivery in Wyoming.

Introduction: The current legal services delivery structure in Wyoming has been developed since 1997, when Wyoming Legal Services became the single Legal Services Corporation program in Wyoming. Prior to that time, there was not a statewide delivery system. There was some coordination of work through the Legal Aid Committee of the State Bar. The Wyoming Bar Foundation, the IOLTA program, had provided funding to each of the three previous LSC-funded programs, which resulted in some coordination of efforts among the programs. While each of the three programs had developed access systems in its own service areas, much of that organization was lost in the processes leading up to the statewide consolidation.

By 1998, a number of groups were working to address access issues. These included the Wyoming State Bar, the Wyoming State Bar Foundation and local bar associations. Wyoming Legal Services, the newly formed statewide LSC-funded program, was working to build its program and create a statewide system within the program. Within this framework, the LSC state planning requirements were addressed.

As the various groups and individuals worked to improve the delivery system, a consensus was developed. It was the general conclusion that pro bono work needed to be encouraged, that pro se information needed to be available and that concrete steps should be taken to expand access to justice. It was also concluded that many of the needs were known, and that action to meet those needs should begin. It was felt that planning should be done in conjunction with concrete action, and that a separate planning entity would not advance the effort. The result of the approach has been sustained and effective efforts to create a system of justice. While much work remains, progress since 1998 has been very substantial.

Initially, the Legal Aid Committee of the State Bar, which includes representatives of the Bar, the Courts, WLS, and private practitioners, acted as a state planning entity. After seeking input from many sources, and after discussions about the most effective approaches in Wyoming, the Committee decided that the most effective way to expand access to the legal system for low-income people would be to increase the amount of pro bono work being done by lawyers in the state. To that end, the Committee developed and put in place a number of significant innovations to encourage pro bono work.

At the same time the Legal Aid Committee was developing its projects, the Wyoming State Bar Foundation began evaluating its options to increase access for low-income clients. It also concluded that pro bono work was critical to ensuring access, and determined that existing systems for pro bono were inadequate. Therefore, the Foundation established a part time Pro Bono Coordinator position within the State Bar. It also revised its grant objectives and requests to encourage the development of private bar projects throughout Wyoming.

The work of the Legal Aid Committee and the Bar Foundation overlapped in some respects, and the groups had some members in common. So, although the two entities were not formally connected, their work is linked together. This structure allowed each entity to focus work on particular topics without duplication of efforts. Since the creation of the Pro Bono coordinator position, state planning and development work has been coordinated through that position.

A number of projects and plans around the topic of pro se work were developed. Because of widely differing practices and attitudes around the state, little real progress was being made on this issue. In March, 2001, the Wyoming Supreme Court established the Citizens' Access to Courts Committee. This group was charged with promoting and efficiently managing citizens' access to Courts in Wyoming. The group originally had representatives from WLS, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Courts and the private bar. Membership has been expanded to include community members from many programs involved the legal system.

A. **To what extent has a comprehensive, integrated and client-centered legal services system been achieved in Wyoming?**

1. What are the important issues that impact upon low income people within your state? How is your state responding to these issues?

There are both procedural and substantive legal issues affecting low-income clients in Wyoming. The substantive issues important in Wyoming are no different in broad outline from the issues anywhere else. Regardless of where they happen to live, people lacking sufficient resources to support a minimum standard of living encounter the same problems. In the legal system, these problems include all the categories contained in the case reporting form of the Legal Services Corporation.

Of course, how these issues are presented varies by place, time and client group. As a practical matter, it is not possible to list or describe how each of these issues manifests itself. However, for illustration, the following examples of important issues are provided:

a. Currently the entrenched "boom or bust" economic pattern of Wyoming is in a boom stage, at least is some parts of the state, producing areas of rapid economic growth. In those places, housing issues are becoming ever more problematic. Now, in addition to the typical

problems, affordable housing is becoming increasing scare. Entire mobile home parks are being closed and all tenants evicted so that the land can be used for more profitable ventures; individuals with mobile homes are unable to find any lots to rent; and rents are increasing dramatically. These circumstances give rise to legal issues involving evictions, liens against mobile homes, consumer debt, public housing and related issues. Likewise, as more people turn to manufactured housing because of its relatively lower cost, there are increasing numbers of cases involving warranties, unfair sales practices, and consumer protection issues.

b. In a number of communities in Wyoming, the immigrant Hispanic population is increasing rapidly. Many of these individuals are finding work as expert craftsmen and in specialized trades. Because of language and cultural barriers, they may lack access to many services, but may not be low-income. However, a portion of this population group is working in the service industry, often for very low wages, and in isolated conditions. This group has extreme needs; housing, access to health care, consumer protection, to list but a few.

c. There exists a group of people who, because of mental or physical illness, often undiagnosed and untreated, are at best only marginally capable of functioning in society. A good number of these people find their way into public housing. However, they may fail to maintain strict compliance with the rules of the Housing Authorities and then find themselves facing eviction proceedings, with no other possible source of housing. Often, these individuals have no idea of the rules governing operation of the housing units, and lack the ability to advocate on their own behalf. These cases present issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and often also present issues of access to health care, as well as disability law issues.

d. Domestic violence is a chronic and very serious problem in Wyoming. There continue to be compelling and unmet needs for legal assistance in all aspects of these cases.

e. There is one Reservation, and one Tribal Court, in Wyoming. The State of Wyoming, through an agreement with the two Tribes of the Wind River Reservation, files actions to establish paternity and obtain child support orders in the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court. However, the State refuses to enforce the Tribal Court order, taking the position that it has no authority to do so. This position is taken in spite of the fact that the State itself obtained the order and that there is a mechanism for obtaining state recognition of Tribal Court orders. Even when the obligor lives off the Reservation and no authority other than the State may act, it will not. The State maintains this position as to the orders from the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court even though it does enforce orders from out-of-state Tribal Courts through child support agency referrals. This policy gives rise to issues of due process and equal protection, as well as to issues of interpretation of state and federal child support law.

f. Over the past several years, cellular telephone service has become increasing popular. It is often particularly attractive to low-income clients, who may be unable to pay the initial installation costs for traditional telephone service, or who may have prior unpaid balances for

those services and so be unable to obtain them. A number of companies are aggressively marketing this telephone service, with advertising that promises very low monthly rates, no initial fees, and so forth. Many low-income clients have signed up for these services, only to find themselves obligated to pay high monthly fees, sometimes including penalties in excess of $1000.00 when they try to cancel the contract after discovering it is not what was promised. These cases present a variety of consumer law issues, including unfair and deceptive trade practices, truth in lending, and Fair Debt Collection Practices issues.

This list presents only a small sample of the legal issues faced by low-income people in Wyoming. Perhaps, though, it does provide some sense of the range of problems facing low-income people here.

Just as there is a whole range of substantive law issues, there is likewise a range of procedural issues. By procedural issues, we mean the practical side of access to justice, the "nuts and bolts" of obtaining legal assistance in a particular matter. This category includes such obvious issues as lack of direct access to Wyoming Legal Services and other funded providers, lack of access to volunteer lawyers, and lack of institutional support for pro se.

In response to both substantive and procedural issues, service providers in Wyoming generally concentrate assistance in particular topics of law, using particular methods. For example, in compliance with applicable regulations, Wyoming Legal Services sets priorities, based on input from the provider and client communities. Within those priorities, it defines delivery methods, and goals for expansion of client access to justice. The priorities are intended to target program work at the most compelling needs of the client communities and to serve as an outline for program planning and case work.

This same approach is generally taken by other funded programs, most of which are limited to particular types of work. The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault limits its work to issues of importance to victims of violence. The Protection and Advocacy program is designed to provide assistance to individuals with certain disability law issues. The Wyoming Guardianship program, a private non-profit corporation, limits its work to issues involving guardianship, conservatorship, representative payee work, and related topics. Generally, organized pro bono work has been placed through the funded programs or local bar association projects, and is targeted at particular topics.

Much volunteer work in Wyoming has been focused on procedural issues. The Legal Aid Committee of the Wyoming State Bar Association has devoted a great deal of work to establishing methods and systems for encouraging and supporting pro bono work by the private bar. The Citizens Access to Courts Committee has focused efforts on creating and distributing standardized pro se packets statewide. The Wyoming State Bar Foundation has set goals intended to encourage pro bono activity within the private bar, and has challenged grantees to actively engage the private bar in service delivery.

2. What are the components of the delivery system?

As alluded to above, the delivery system consists of funded assistance programs, volunteer projects, and services supported by the Wyoming Bar Association, the Wyoming State Bar Foundation, and various State and Federal agencies. Direct services are provided by a number of entities.

Wyoming Legal Services is the single Legal Services Corporation grantee in Wyoming, and the largest civil legal assistance provider in the state. It is a statewide program, and receives funding to provide Basic Field, Native American and Migrant services. It provides a range of direct services in priority civil cases, from advice and brief service to extended litigation. Its LSC work is for individual low-income clients. The program also provides the Legal Assistance Developer program, funded by the Wyoming Department of Health, Aging Division. There are no Area Agencies on Aging in Wyoming. The Developer program provides telephone advice and brief service to clients 60 years old and older, and also works to expand the direct assistance available to the older community.

Wyoming Legal Services and the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, working with the University of Wyoming College of Law, have previously received funding through the Department of Justice Violence Against Women's Act program to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence statewide. For 2002 and thereafter, it has been agreed that the Coalition and the Law School will seek the VAWA funding to provide services statewide for domestic violence clients; a decision on that grant is pending. This program provides a full range of services from advice through litigation to eligible clients.

Other programs providing extended services to clients statewide include the College of Law legal services clinic, the Protection and Advocacy program and the Wyoming Guardianship program. The ACLU does maintain a staff position in Wyoming. The Wyoming State Bar Association has a Pro Bono Coordinator position, which assists in promoting pro bono work on a statewide basis. Local bar associations have developed various assistance programs, which are generally county wide and independent of other service providers.

Recently, a Fair Housing office, supported by HUD, was established in Wyoming to provide services throughout the state. Wyoming's Public Defender system provides civil assistance to some clients in parental neglect and abuse, and termination, cases. Other state agencies, through either the Attorney General's office or through private contract, provide legal assistance in certain matters, most typically Adult Protective and guardianship issues.

3. Has this system created mechanisms to assess its performance?

There is a great deal of cooperative work between the service providers in Wyoming. However, the individual programs continue to maintain separate operations. There is not a single

standard of evaluation and review, nor is there a single entity that performs such reviews. Each provider has its own standards to meet, usually set by funding sources. Wyoming Legal Services explicitly evaluates its program under the ABA standards, and in compliance with the LSC Performance Criteria. All providers must meet the standards established by the Wyoming Rules of Professional Conduct.

4. Does the system work to ensure equitable resource allocation?

Since the three Legal Services Corporation programs in Wyoming were consolidated into one statewide program in 1997, Wyoming has made substantial progress in creating and institutionalizing a statewide delivery system with equitable resource allocation. Initially, it should be noted that defining and measuring equal access and equitable resource allocation is somewhat difficult.

One simple measurement is case numbers compared to client populations. The provider programs do not maintain joint case statistics, so no evaluation of the entire system is available. Based only upon WLS case statistics, over the past years the program has handled fewer cases in distant counties, by about 1 - 2%, than might be expected from the population figures. That is, if a particular county's poverty population is 5% of the total state poverty population, then it might be expected that 5% of the total annual cases would come from that county. In fact, the statistics typically reflect that about 1 - 2% fewer cases than predicted by this model are closed in many of our counties. This analysis suggests that resource allocation may not be equitable.

We recognize that this approach is probably not entirely accurate, because there are a number of other factors to consider in determining what resources are being used. For example, a one hour trial, held where program staff work, will use fewer resources than will the exact same case in a community 150 miles away from a program office. The first can be handled in a couple of hours, the latter will require at least a day of attorney time just to attend the hearing. So, each case in a distant location probably absorbs more resources, and equalizing case percentages may in fact not be an equitable allocation. Likewise, certain types of cases tend to take more time than do other types. Domestic law cases normally require at least twice as much attorney time as do eviction or consumer law cases. Providing service to some clients, such as those with mental disabilities, requires more time. Many other factors, such as the availability of local bar programs, may affect the need for legal services in a particular community.

However, as a practical matter, we have no better way to measure equitable distribution of resources than comparing case numbers. Use of case statistics provides at least a base-line for evaluating access. For lack of a better model, it is this system that has been used to decide that counties in which WLS has no office are not receiving equitable access. For 2002, The Wyoming State Bar Foundation has provided funding to WLS specifically to address this issue. The program is developing outreach projects in response to this concern.

WLS has designed its program to ensure client access. The program has a telephone intake system, and it provides information and advice to eligible clients on a call-in basis. Each of the program offices has toll-free telephone lines and each provides telephone-based assistance. Clients do not need to come to a program office to receive services. Case acceptance never depends upon the geographic location of the client. Besides the telephone advice work, the program provides extended case service to clients in all substantive law program priorities. Program staff travel statewide for hearings, trials and otherwise as needed. In addition, the program engages in community education projects, and program staff are active in local and state Bar Association activities.

The other statewide service providers have developed their own guidelines for case intake and acceptance. Generally, those programs do work statewide.

Maintaining equal access, however that term is defined, is a process, not a one-time construct. All service providers must constantly monitor the needs and trends within client communities and the legal system to evaluate the effectiveness of existing procedures. As needs change, so must the system. Right now, a great deal of work is being done around pro se and pro bono issues. As this work progresses, new needs and access issues will also develop. Appropriate responses will need to be fashioned as these needs arise.

5. How is technology used?

The use of technology varies substantially among components of the justice community. The Wyoming State Bar and the Wyoming Supreme Court have websites and use extensive computer technology. Wyoming Legal Services has basic computer technology - computers for each case handler, Internet access from each computer, networks within each office, and standard fax and telephone systems. The extent to which other providers rely upon technology appears to depend upon size to some extent, with smaller programs lacking the resources to maintain technology.

Communication among members of the community has been facilitated by technology. Most committee meetings are done by telephone. Much written communication is by email. The Citizens' Access to Courts Committee has a listserve to allow effective communication.

The Court system and the law school have access to computerized research systems. WLS uses LoisLaw for online research, as does the Coalition Against Domestic Violence. There have been discussions among service providers about joining together to get Westlaw or Lexis, but the cost has been considered prohibitive, even with a collaborative group.

WLS currently plans to apply for an LSC technology assistance grant to create a Website, which can be used or linked to by other justice community components. We hope to include substantive law information, program and application information, and contact information for

other providers.

6. How has the system expanded its resources to serve hard to reach groups?

Now is not a time of expanding financial resources for service programs generally in Wyoming. The LSC funding for Wyoming has decreased about 25% from the mid 1990s, going from $825,952 to $620,527 today. IOLTA funding has decreased by about the same percentage, from $45,000 to $33,000. The Legal Assistance Developer funding through the State has decreased more than 20%, from $54,000 to $42,000.

So, in order to maintain service levels, our programs have increased their use of technology, have created cooperative projects to pool resources, and have broadened the network of providers to reach more people more effectively. In addition, the State Bar has concentrated efforts on expanding pro bono work, which has been the primary means of expanding access.

The most significant new resource has been new funding for services to victims of domestic violence. Wyoming Legal Services, the statewide Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the University of Wyoming College of Law have received funding from the Department of Justice of approximately $350,000 for an 18 month period to expand services to victims of domestic violence. Renewal of that grant is being sought by the Coalition and the College of Law.

The IOLTA Foundation is currently working with the College of Law to complete a needs assessment survey. From the information gathered, it is expected that an evaluation of needs can be made. Once that material is available, plans will be developed for seeking additional resources to meet identified needs.

7. How is new leadership nurtured?

Wyoming Legal Services has a 12 person Board, with 4 of the positions being client positions. Of the 8 attorney positions, one is required to be filled by the Wind River Bar Association from the Wind River Reservation. Although Wyoming is not ethnically diverse, WLS strives for diversity among staff and Board. All staff members are encouraged to pursue their particular interests, including development of special projects. They are encouraged to participate actively in local and state level Bar activities, including assuming leadership roles.

The policies of other providers are not subject to any control by WLS. However, it is clear that efforts are being made to foster diversity and to seek guidance from client communities. For example, the Citizens Access to Courts Committee has a membership reflecting a range of interests and concerns. The Wyoming State Bar Foundation is currently working with the College of Law to complete a needs assessment survey, which will obtain direct input from clients concerning legal needs.

8. What are the next steps?

There are a number of identified steps to be taken:

- During the next two months, WLS will complete development of outreach and pro bono projects in each county, working directly with each county bar association to the extent possible.

- All partners in the delivery system need to assess the effectiveness of the new pro se forms. Based on clients' experiences with the forms, we will need to create a system to provide clinics or other assistance to individuals needing help with the new pro se forms

- Working together, the justice community should develop a technology assessment and implementation plan.

- Overall, the components of the delivery and planning groups need to assess progress, determine the next phase in existing projects, and implement new projects, including resource development.

9. What is the greatest obstacle to achieving the delivery system?

Lack of resources is the single biggest obstacle to achieving a fully-integrated statewide system of justice. There are a number of groups working in concert to expand access to justice, and those groups have been successful in their efforts. Much of the work has been done on a volunteer basis. At some point, expansion of these efforts will require staffing. There is a point past which the provider programs can not maintain existing case loads and still develop and deliver new services. The expansion of pro se and pro bono networks will help substantially, but these efforts can not meet all needs for legal assistance.

10. Has a cost/benefit analysis been done?

No cost/benefit analysis has been done. We are not aware of protocols for doing such an analysis.

11. What resources would help to advance system development?

Additional financial resources are critical to expanding the system of justice in Wyoming. Technology assistance is also vital. For the smaller programs, including Wyoming Legal Services, technology improvements can to some extent offset staff losses resulting from shrinking financial resources. The dilemma is that these programs can not devote staff time to developing expertise in the topic, nor can they afford to hire consultants to assist with technology development.

An example of assistance that WLS believes to be very helpful is the grant application support being provided for the LSC Website technical assistance grant applications. However, there is a whole range of technological innovations, including telephone services, case management and Internet capabilities that our programs can not develop without outside support.

B. **To what extent have intended outcomes of a comprehensive, integrated client-centered legal service delivery system been achieved including but not limited to service effectiveness/quality; efficiency; equity in terms of client access; greater involvement by members of the private bar in the legal lives of clients, and client-community empowerment?**

1. What strategies have been designed to address legal needs?

The primary strategy for addressing substantive legal needs is direct representation of clients. WLS, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Protection and Advocacy, the Wyoming Guardianship program and state and local bar programs all provide direct representation to individual clients. The direct service providers also use a wide variety of community education projects to provide assistance and information to clients.

The Citizens' Access to Courts Committee has succeeded for the first time in making pro se information available statewide. This committee, under the leadership of the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, reviewed pro se materials in use throughout Wyoming in domestic matters. The committee then developed complete pro se form packets for use statewide. The forms have been printed, distributed to each District Court Clerk in the state, and a system for distribution and ongoing production has been put in place. As of April 1, 2002, each county has the forms, and any individual may obtain the forms for at a minimal fee of $10.00 to offset copying costs.

2. Has the legal services delivery system expanded access through coordination among providers?

We believe that access has been expanded although systems for measuring that information have not been developed.

One of the benefits of Wyoming's small population is that the number of people directly working to deliver legal assistance to low-income people is quite small. Moreover, membership on the committees overlaps, and includes staff of the direct providers. So, it is relatively easy to maintain contact and working relationships among the provider groups.

Much of the coordination of work is done on an informal basis. Generally, staff of the programs know each other, and are in frequent contact concerning legal issues, program development, case handling, client referrals and similar matters. This sort of cooperation is of

We assign the highest priority to taking client calls as they come in, because this group often will not call back. Unfortunately, although we seek to maintain on-staff Spanish language ability, we do not always have staff who can speak Spanish. So, we work with state outreach workers and other providers to have those offices, who do have Spanish-speaking staff, place calls to us for clients. That way, the client can receive immediate assistance and information. We do have arrangements for translation services, and can translate letters, agreements and other documents as necessary. The LSC migrant programs in both Montana and Colorado have provided us with backup, translation services, and similar assistance. By using all of these resources, we are able to maintain a level of access that would be impossible for our program working alone.

Currently, a statewide Hispanic-interest group is being formed in Wyoming. In addition, a group in Jackson has been formed to address the needs of the growing Hispanic population there. WLS is working with these groups to establish an outreach clinic, probably in cooperation with the Teton County Bar Association to expand access for Hispanic residents in that county. We hope to use the model developed there in other regions statewide to improve access for Hispanic communities.

5. Has there been improvement in access to a full range of services?

There has been some expansion in the range of available services. WLS staff, with both LSC and non-LSC funding, has expanded the program's community education work. We provide training for other service providers, for community members, for school students, and for professional groups. We maintain and distribute written information on a range of topics of importance to our clients. We provide information and some research to private attorneys in elder law matters, Tribal Law issues, and specialized topics such as Social Security law.

Other statewide programs also provide a range of direct services. The Coalition Against Domestic Violence provides extensive training and community education to law enforcement the private bar and community members. The only programs that limit services to a particular region are the local county bar projects. The only statewide program that specifically limits its range of services is the advice, brief service and referral telephone system that WLS operates as part of the Legal Assistance Developer.

There is no funded program to provide services that are restricted or prohibited under the LSC regulations.

The only substantial increase in resources for legal assistance since 1998 has been the Violence Against Women's Act funding from the Department of Justice. Renewal of that grant is currently pending. The project provides a full range of services statewide, but is limited to victims of domestic violence.

Generally, direct service programs operate on a statewide basis. While resources tend to be

extremely limited, they are not normally restricted for use to any one place. There is very little local funding, although some counties contract privately for some kinds of work, such as Guardian Ad Litem services, involuntary commitment defense, and neglect and abuse defense.

6. Is the system efficient? Is there duplication?

The system is reasonably efficient, given the available resources. There is some duplication, but it is not necessarily inefficient. For example, the College of Law legal services clinic provides general civil assistance, as does WLS. But the Law School has purposes beyond provision of legal assistance for its clinic. Allocating types of service or types of cases between these two programs would not achieve the purposes of either program.

As to other more specialized programs, generally if one program provides a particular service, the others don't. Again, providers are generally aware of each other's priorities and types of service, and avoid duplication simply because no one has sufficient resources to duplicate work that is already being done. Since the number of providers is very small, and our programs work regularly with each other, areas of duplication or confusion of effort become apparent fairly quickly. These issues are dealt with as they arise.

For example, over the past several years, it has become apparent that the state has no system for providing guardianship services to certain people. In particular, there has been no system to provide the legal representation to establish whether a guardianship is even appropriate for elderly low-income individuals. Often this issue is presented when an individual of questionable competency needs medical care or other services. In some instances a private provider - a nursing home or hospital, will contract for the legal work. Sometimes a county entity has done the work. Sometimes the Attorney General's office has provided the assistance if the individual is in a state institution, and sometimes WLS does the work.

As all of the providers continued to deal with this problem, it became obvious that a system is needed. The opportunity arose to apply for funding from the ABA to work on this issue. So, WLS applied for funding, with the support of the Wyoming Guardianship Corporation, the Wyoming State Department of Family Services, the Wyoming State Department of Health, Aging Division; the Long Term Care Ombudsman, and the Wyoming Pro Bono Coordinator. Our application was successful and the project is now being implemented.

7. Has the system expanded the involvement of private attorneys?

The number of attorneys working directly to provide assistance to low-income persons has increased over the past several years. A number of local bar associations, most notably the Sheridan County Bar Association, have developed special projects to expand the assistance available to low-income individuals. Most of the work being done continues to be either individual case work or advice and referral clinics. A great deal of work has been done to lay

foundations for expanding the participation of private attorneys in the system.

Since 1997, the Legal Aid Committee of the Wyoming State Bar, made up of representatives from the Bar, private practitioners, the Courts, and WLS, has taken a number of important steps to expand participation by private attorneys in access to justice work. One of the committee's first successful efforts was obtaining an amendment to the Rules of Professional Conduct to include an aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service or a donation of $500.00 to a program providing civil legal assistance to low-income clients.

The committee has also been instrumental in the establishment of a "pro bono" day at the annual Wyoming State Bar Association Meeting. Activities include a luncheon with featured speakers and the awarding of Pro Bono recognition awards. The committee sponsors a CLE class on a topic of importance for legal assistance work. This project has substantially increased the visibility of the State Bar Association's work on access to justice issues, and is intended to encourage participation by the private Bar.

The committee has developed a proposal to allow CLE credit for pro bono work. The proposal is being circulated for comments now. The next step will be to seek approval from the CLE committee, and then approval from the Wyoming Supreme Court.

The Wyoming State Bar Foundation, the IOLTA program, has maintained an active role in expanding opportunities for the private bar to participate in access to justice issues. The Foundation has established and funded a part-time Pro Bono Coordinator position within the Wyoming State Bar. That position will allow for the expansion of pro bono work statewide, and the coordination of the existing work being done by the various providers.

As part of its continuing interest in access issues, the Foundation has targeted its 2002 grants to projects designed to expand private bar participation in access work in communities where WLS does not have offices. Our program has been awarded funding to do outreach work involving the private bar in those communities. This project is being developed now. The project is providing the means for WLS to coordinate service delivery with local bar associations in each county.

The individual projects are being designed in cooperation with local bar associations, and so will be directly responsive to the needs of the individual communities. Because the Wyoming State Bar office and the Pro Bono Coordinator are assisting in implementation of this project, there is enormous potential for real improvement and expansion of the existing pro bono systems.

The Wyoming Bar Foundation is working with the College of Law to complete a needs assessment survey. It is intended to provide baseline information about the unmet legal needs within the state. From this information, strategies can be developed to target resources to meet particular needs. It is expected that this information will also provide the basis for resource

development work within the state.

C. **Are the best organizational and human resource management configurations and approaches being used?**

1. What is the current configuration of programs?

Currently, Wyoming Legal Services is the only LSC funded program in Wyoming. It is a statewide program.

- Its total LSC funding for 2002 is $620,527.
- WLS provides the Legal Assistance Developer services in Wyoming. That work is funded by the Wyoming Department of Health, Aging Division. That program's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 31, so funding for the second half of 2002 has not been awarded. It is expected that the total funding for 2002 will be $42,000.
- The Wyoming State Bar Foundation has awarded WLS an outreach grant, on a reimbursable basis, for an amount not to exceed $33,000.
- The American Bar Association has awarded WLS a $7,500 dollar grant for a guardianship project, to be done in cooperation with a number of other statewide providers.

The civil legal assistance project of the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is funded by the Department of Justice, Violence Against Women's Act program. The current grant is pending. Approved funding for the previous 18 month period was approximately $350.000.

Other statewide providers include the Protection and Advocacy program, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Wyoming State Bar Pro Bono Coordinator and the civil legal services clinic at the College of Law. The Wyoming Guardianship program provides some legal assistance in guardianship issues statewide. The Wyoming Public Defender's Office provides civil representation in a limited number of cases in some counties. Funding for these programs comes from a number of sources. Each of these programs maintains its own records, and not all of the funding information is available publically.

Other assistance providers work in local communities. There are local bar association projects in some communities. Some family violence shelters have volunteer attorney arrangements.

There is also a substantial amount of pro bono work being done by individual attorneys. This work is not often recorded, and can not be quantified.

2. What other configurations have been tried?

As part of the Department of Justice VAWA project, WLS and the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, working with the College of Law, created a joint project to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence. Some project staff were placed at WLS, some at the Coalition offices in Laramie. The supervising attorney for the entire project worked from the Coalition office. A single application form and process were created, and case review and acceptance were done jointly.

This approach did not turn out to be effective. There was duplication of efforts, the record keeping and general operating systems of the two programs were not compatible, and the result was a reduction in efficient delivery of services. It has been agreed that it will be more effective for one program to provide all of the project services. Therefore, under the new grant proposal, the Coalition will become the lead provider of legal assistance to domestic violence victims.

3. What are the duplications in the systems?

Providers work very deliberately to avoid duplication of efforts. After the restructuring of the domestic violence project, there is not a great deal of duplication in the system. Each program does have its own management and other internal systems. While it might be possible to consolidate some of those things, it is likely that the effort would divert far too many resources from service provision to be cost effective.

4. What innovative delivery systems have been adopted?

As has been described by this report, there has been much innovation and expansion of service delivery systems in Wyoming. To summarize:

- the Wyoming Rules of Professional Conduct have been amended to suggest that all attorneys provide 50 hours or a $500 dollar donation to a civil legal assistance program serving low income clients

- specific programs have been instituted to recognize pro bono contributions, to provide CLE training and to highlight projects during the Wyoming State Bar Annual meeting

- a proposal to allow CLE credit for pro bono work has been developed

- The Wyoming Bar Foundation is working with the College of Law on a needs assessment survey to quantify the existing needs for legal assistance in the state

- The Wyoming Bar Foundation has created and staffed a part-time Pro Bono Coordinator position within the State Bar

-the Citizens Access to Courts Committee has been established by the Wyoming Supreme Court. This Committee has created for the first time standardized pro se packets for domestic law issues, and has created a system of distribution and support statewide.

- the Citizens Access to Courts Committee drafted and gained adoption of amendments to the Professional Conduct and Court rules, explicitly allowing provision of "unbundled" legal services.

-The Wyoming Bar Foundation has funded an outreach project through WLS which will develop targeted pro bono projects in each county

Taken together, these projects demonstrate a capacity and a willingness in Wyoming to build an integrated and comprehensive system of justice based upon the needs of the client communities. We anticipate the work to be ongoing, and look forward to continued improvements in our system.

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