

Pro Bono team at Sparke Helmore

Video Transcript, March 2020

Hannah Rose Partner & Head of Pro Bono Sparke Helmore Lawyers	<p>The purpose of our pro bono practice is to provide access to justice for individuals experiencing disadvantage and also to support eligible charitable organisations with their legal needs. I'm really proud of our efforts during the last financial year. Our firm significantly invested in Wills Clinics for Aboriginal people in rural, regional and remote areas throughout Australia. Last year we provided eight clinics in Australia with our first ever Wills Clinic in the Northern Territory.</p>
Georgia Murphy-Haste Sydney Pro Bono Coordinator Sparke Helmore Lawyers	<p>So we run Aboriginal Wills Clinics where we go out to remote and regional communities and we provide community legal education. We also take instructions from clients and then we execute their estate documents. Through the Aboriginal Wills Clinics we hope to provide access to justice and also provide community legal education to Aboriginal communities.</p>
James Stallan Lawyer Sparke Helmore Lawyers	<p>We actually heard an interesting story on the first day when we were welcomed by one of the Elders of the Wahlabul people who pretty much explained how important the landscape was for them in the Jubullum area and what the mountains and the rivers mean and what it means to welcome people into their community. So it was a great experience for us at Sparke Helmore and as a young lawyer, I don't think I could have asked for a better experience.</p>
Hannah Rose Partner & Head of Pro Bono Sparke Helmore Lawyers	<p>Another key part of our pro bono legal practice is the provision of legal services to charitable organisations. We work a lot with health organisations including last year with Mates Against Melanoma.</p>
Jason Sprott Founder, Mates Against Melanoma	<p>In 2004 I was diagnosed with melanoma. In 2016 it was diagnosed a metastatic melanoma and I had my T7 and half of my T8 vertebrae removed. Eleven months later it returned and I had two tumours removed from the stomach. Three months later in October I had two tumours diagnosed in the brain. After that I was on medication for 12 months, which did not work, so in 2019 I had two tumours removed from the brain. In the middle of all of this I started a charity called Mates Against Melanoma which was a reason to get out of bed every day and from there I was lucky enough to engage Sparke Helmore Lawyers who were willing to get on board and help me set up the charity. Without those guys we wouldn't have a charity today.</p>

Hannah Rose
Partner & Head of
Pro Bono
Sparke Helmore Lawyers

We also established a new telephone advice clinic with the Marrickville Legal Centre. We hold this clinic in our Sydney office where our lawyers can come and participate by providing legal advice to vulnerable people in the local area.

Vasili Maroulis
Managing Principal
Solicitor
Marrickville Legal Centre

Marrickville Legal Centre provides free legal advice. In some instances ongoing representation to people in the community that just basically can't afford it. They've got no access to justice. In effect and in all facets of the support that we receive from Sparkes what that actually helps us do is direct more of our resource into, you know, real front line services to help complex, high-needs clients.

Scott McDonald
Partner
Sparke Helmore Lawyers

I think it's important to do pro bono work at large firms like Sparke Helmore for a number of reasons. Firstly, we participate in our broader communities. Many of our clients are corporate clients but doing pro bono work makes us get out of our office towers and go to our suburban and remote rural communities and communicate on legal matters, on social matters. I think it's also important because many of the young lawyers in large city law firms now don't get much variety in the type of work they do and it gives them an education and a different aspect to practice, a different part of practice that they probably otherwise wouldn't get access to or involvement in.
