

CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT OF THE ADVISORY AND RESEARCH COUNCIL



The FJC is ramping up efforts to bolster the adoption of therapeutic justice in family law.

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) established the Advisory and Research Council (ARC) on Therapeutic Justice on 1 July 2020. Comprising leading international Therapeutic Justice (TJ) experts, the ARC was formed to assist in the FJC's efforts to adopt and advance a TJ approach to family justice and practice.

ARC members have been instrumental in shaping the FJC's TJ narrative. One key initiative they helped design was the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Pilot, which was initiated in September 2020. High-needs and high-conflict cases were identified and triaged at an early stage of the court proceedings and assigned to MDTs, each consisting of Judges,

Judge-Mediators, Court Family Specialists and Case Managers who dealt with these cases using a problem-solving and non-adversarial approach. A total of 25 cases were assigned to the Pilot, which will conclude in 2022.

In 2021, the ARC provided guidance in compiling relevant TJ reading materials for local law schools. It also provided training to FJC Judges and family law practitioners on TJ methods, practices and techniques.

The ARC will continue to work closely with the FJC to operationalise TJ more fully in the family justice system.



FNE seeks to help parties undergoing divorce proceedings reach a consensual settlement of their disputed financial matters.

FAMILY NEUTRAL EVALUATION

In October 2021, the FJC launched the Family Neutral Evaluation (FNE) pilot to increase the suite of alternative dispute resolution options available for parties undergoing divorce proceedings in court.

Under the pilot, FNE is voluntary and offered for suitable cases where the issues in dispute relate to financial ancillary matters such as maintenance and the division of matrimonial assets. A neutral Evaluator provides divorcing parties with a non-binding indication of the likely outcomes should the matters proceed for adjudication. This evaluation serves as a basis for parties to achieve a consensual settlement of their disputed financial matters. Evaluators are drawn from the FJC's pool of judges (serving and retired) in the Family Dispute Resolution Division.

A review will be conducted when the pilot concludes at the end of 2022 to assess its effectiveness, with a view to include FNE as a permanent dispute resolution alternative in the FJC.

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Partnerships

Developing
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Connecting With
The Community