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## NSW needs computers in cells

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“Providing people in prison with computers in their cells would radically improve the outcome for prisoners” said CJC President, the Hon **John Dowd** AO QC at the launch of the Computers in Cells campaign. “It would enable delivery of domestic violence and de-radicalisation counselling, education, and legal aid services safely and efficiently. The ACT government has safely had computers in cells for the last nine years” he continued.

Mr Dowd said: “**I commend the Northern Territory and Queensland governments** for their support of [our proposal](#) for computers in cells.” The Northern Territory Attorney-General, Natasha Fyles said “The Northern Territory Government is committed to reducing domestic violence in the community and agrees that the online learning tool within prisons may help with this problem”. Spokesperson for Queensland Minister for Corrective Services acknowledged the merits of the project, describing it as “a safe and effective delivery method to change prisoner behaviour...Queensland is working towards the provision of safe and secure online services to prisoners.”

“Despite this significant support, the **NSW government has dragged its feet**. It has publicly rejected the need for these services saying ‘mental health staff in counselling is the only means of intervention.’ It also said it ‘does not have the infrastructure to support online counselling at all its correctional centres.’ Why is it finding reasons not to implement a program of computers in cells instead of developing one?” asked Mr Dowd.

“The NSW government needs to allocate funds from the \$3.8 billion prison-building program to these essential services. Costs are estimated at approximately **\$230,000 to install the computer server** infrastructure, and \$120,000 per year thereafter for a 600 cell prison such as Nowra” said Mr Dowd.

ICJ Commissioner and former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, the Hon **Elizabeth Evatt** AC commented, “the financial cost of these services is minimal, considering the significant impact online counselling could have in **reducing domestic violence recidivism by up to 30%.**”

*Community Justice Coalition Inc is a coalition of individuals and organisations  
advocating reform of the criminal justice system in NSW*

**Founder Benefactors include:**

• **Kep Enderby QC** • **Elizabeth Evatt AC** • **John Dowd QC AO** • **Larissa Behrendt**  
• **Kevin Cook** • **Wendy McCarthy AO** • **Anne Deveson AO** • **Joan Bielski AO** • **Jocelyn McGirr**



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