

CAPACITY TOOLKIT LAUNCHED



Attending the launch of the Kit: left to right (rear): Maureen Tangney (Attorney General's Department [AGD] Acting Director General), Jenna Macnab and Anne Mangan. (Front): Julie McCrossin (hypothetical facilitator) and Julia Haraksin (AGD Manager Diversity Services).

The NSW Attorney General, the Hon John Hatzistergos, MLC launched a *Capacity Toolkit* on 31 March 2008 designed to assist a broad audience in determining a person's decision-making capacity. It will be a valuable point of reference for carers and community organisations as well as others who undertake capacity assessments as part of their professional service, such as doctors, community workers, lawyers and finance staff.

The *Capacity Toolkit* was developed by the Diversity Services branch of the Attorney General's Department of NSW and is the result of extensive community consultation.

The *Toolkit* is intended to be a comprehensive resource and includes:

- information about decision-making capacity
- principles on which the concept of capacity is assessed
- guidance on when a capacity assessment may be needed, and
- information about the different legal tests of capacity , such as making a contract, a will, managing financial matters or making health decisions.

Until now, there have been few local resources to help in capacity assessment. This *Toolkit* will make the process easier, and sets out simple steps to follow in determining capacity. Dementia is one of many illnesses and disabilities that can restrict a person's capacity to make decisions. Around 1000 Australians are diagnosed with dementia each week. By 2050, it is estimated that almost three per cent of the nation's population will be affected by dementia.

For more information, view the Diversity Services website, contact Diversity Services, telephone: 02 8688 7507 or email: diversity.services@agd.nsw.gov.au.