
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2015 2:31 PM
To: redress
Subject: Feedback on Royal Commission paper on Forgotten Australians

To whom it may concern,

I wish to submit the following on my behalf for consideration:-

1. Elements of redress for child sexual abuse survivors.

I believe that the effects go further than affecting just the child abuse survivor and that psychological and therapeutic counselling should extend to the spouse and children of the survivor so that they can gain an understanding of the impact the survivor's trauma has had on marriage and child rearing. This will give them the opportunity to work through issues together.

I believe that the trauma of the child sexual abuse has a very serious affect on medical and dental health as well and this in turn seriously affects the way of life for many survivors. Dental health is fundamental to good physical health because eating healthy is adversely affected by poor dental health. The costs of dental health is often out of the financial reach of many survivors so assistance is needed. I recommend that where a survivor warrants it that their Medicare card be noted in such a way that they can receive quality medical, psychological and dental treatment on a bulk billed arrangement. Many survivors will also be pensioners so consideration should be given to them receiving a "White Card" similar to a DVA "Gold Card".

Studies have shown that people who have high levels of stress and anxiety can end up with severe infections and deteriorations of dental health.

2. Eligibility

I believe the definition should be broadened to include all people who have suffered abuse in institutions. The matrix for assessing severity can take care of the amount of severity involved. For example, if sexual abuse was rated 100% the other forms of abuse would rate further down the scale on a case by case basis.

3. Redress Payment

I believe that the redress payment should be a maximum more in line with the Irish Scheme for those considered the most serious cases. Judging the severity can come from the facts around doctor visits, specialist visits, psychiatrist visits and hospitalisation over a lifetime. In my case, hospitalisation would be in the vicinity of 1 full year and more than 1,000 doctor, specialist and psychiatrist visits over a lifetime. These figures can be obtained from Medicare and Health Funds. The costs to my family to support this in monetary terms is tremendous let alone the psychological effects on the family as a whole.

Whilst I believe it is impossible to put a \$ figure on redress needed to compensate survivors, I understand it is necessary to have some means of calculating an amount.

I believe that it is fair for payments already paid to be taken into account in any redress scheme. Payments to me along the way have helped to cover my additional medical costs associated directly to my childhood sexual abuse.

4. Redress Scheme Process.

Following on from 3 above, it is possible to assess the medical and psychological impact of child sexual abuse by statistics obtained from medicare and Health funds and possibly hospitals. Also, GPs, Psychologists, Counsellors and Psychiatrists can provide reports from their records.

A further way of assisting survivors in their homes is to use counsellors who visit them at home. I have been receiving from time to time visits from the Outreach program at the Melbourne Clinic. I have found this very good. It means that survivors would not "fall through the cracks" because someone would be visiting them to see how they

are rather that the survivor not making the effort to go to a session or appointment. The person who visits assess how the survivor is "travelling" and sometimes arranges to meet outside the house at a local shopping centre for a coffee to get the person "up and about".

5. Final Comments

Financial redress is important but it is not the be all and end all.

Repairing relationships within families is vitally important and is imperative if survivors are to live a peaceful life in their later years.

Family members and the survivors themselves did not know in the early years of relationships what was wrong and what was the cause of so many difficulties in their family life.

Survivors tried to sue institutions over many years but were blocked by Statute of Limitation restrictions.

When I went as the lead person for 17 of my institutional survivors, I had to relive the whole saga over and over again. This case was run in the Supreme Court in Brisbane and a search of the records can bring up the case. I had a Workcover claim and they searched the court and obtained the facts of my case and used them against me in a County Court action in Melbourne. I was made to relive my childhood abuse all over again on the stand when it was totally irrelevant to my Workcover case. I would like to see court documents on survivor cases "closed/sealed" from public searches.

I trust this is helpful to you.

If you need any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I have already appeared personally before the commission in [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]