

## Engagement Session Q&A – 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

### **Some survivors find it hard to attain records so if a survivor has no records even after search how will that impact panel's decision?**

**Joanna** – in this situation the survivor should make it clear in their application what they've done to get their records and why it wasn't possible. We have had decisions made when records haven't been available. You can be reassuring to people because if an applicant can show that they haven't been able to get records for specific reasons then this will be taken into account in the decision making process.

### **When coming back for additional info, does that go back through redress support service or does it go directly to the panel?**

**Joanna** – When a panel asks for more information, which we describe as clarifying questions, then this will come via a letter from Redress Scotland. We send this to the survivor's Scottish Government case worker who will communicate this with the survivor. Our communication is generally done through letters in this part of the process.

### **Survivors have been asked for supporting statement from family. A lot of survivors are worried about those because if they ask family member it adds distress and they have also questioned whether statements from family members would be valid. What's your views on that and any advice to pass on to survivors?**

**Joanna** – There are different requirements for fixed payment and individually assessed payments. With an individually assessed payment survivors should provide one further piece of supporting information in relation to the abuse they have experienced. We understand this is a difficult because it is very unlikely that perpetrators and institutions will have records about the abuse of individual children. Survivors therefore can consider what is the best way for them to gather supporting information. Some survivors have made statements to police and have used these in their applications. Others have spoken with family, friends or other survivors and then their statements have become supporting information.

Panels have made positive decisions where there's been a supporting letter from wife, child, sibling etc. It can be clear that supporting information from a relative or friend will usually be accepted by panel members.

### **Some survivors would like to speak to panel members as it would be better than in writing. What's your view on that?**

**Joanna** – If survivors would like to speak to panel members they should say that in their application and it would probably be helpful for them to state

the reasons why they would like to do this. The current position is that panel members can decide if they will invite a survivor to speak with them to give oral testimony. The scheme has been designed so that survivors do not have to speak directly to panel members as there was recognition that this could potentially be a very difficult experience for survivors.

**Can you explain a bit more about Redress Scotland 'quality checks'?**

**Joanna** – We check each completed application to make sure everything is included that has been listed as part of the completed application. The reason we do this is so that delays are minimised for survivors. This check is completed by our operations team - It would take much longer for panel members to complete this check.

**What is best way to pass on survivor feedback from survivor who is not in survivor forum?**

**Joanna** – We're taking an open approach and working with survivors who have approached us directly and who are now doing some work with us. We have a communications email address but will think about setting up a specific email address for survivors to get in touch and give feedback. If your organisation feels they would benefit from Redress Scotland coming out to directly work with you and a group of survivors then we are happy to do this. Please get in touch and let us know if this is something you would be interested in.

**How are apologies going to be coordinated?**

**Joanna** – We'll have to pass that on to Scottish Government as they are responsible for this part of the scheme. We will get an update for you on that.

**Would panel members be able to directly share their experience of making decisions?**

**Joanna** – Confidentiality brings a bit of a challenge in relation to this as it would not be possible to talk about individual decisions. What we have done is started a series of articles where panel members talk about their work and we hope that provides some insight as to who our panel members are and how they work.

**What's the difference between fixed payment and individually assessed payment (IAP)?**

**Joanna** – Fixed is a £10k payment and survivors don't have to provide a statement or supporting information. We respect survivor's decision but people can come back at a later date and apply for an individually assessed payment. Individually Assessed Payments are £20k to £100k and are assessed using the assessment framework. These require a more detailed statement of abuse and supporting information.

**If we're working with survivors can we give testimony?**

**Joanna** – Yes, panels will accept and assess whatever the survivor has chosen to use as their supporting information.

**Some survivors have been in high-profile cases, would news articles be useful in supporting documents?**

**Joanna** – It's up to every individual survivor to include what they feel necessary and that extends to newspaper coverage. We would see that as information in the public domain and panel members can include such information in their assessment and decision making.

**What is the best way in which we can support this important work moving forward?**

**Joanna** – There's a few different ways you can support the redress scheme. I hope this morning has given you good information to share with survivors and help people be better informed – that's a key way to support the scheme. If you have criticism of how we are working, or information on what you think we could do better then please tell us about it – we will listen and take on feedback as part of making improvements. Also as I said before you may want to invite us to talk to your colleagues or survivors and we are keen to do that so we are sharing information widely.

**As a survivor organisation who also supports survivors who have perpetrated sexual offences.... how does that work regarding applications?**

**Joanna** – If a survivor has committed certain serious offences then the panel members would have to consider whether they are eligible for redress. This is set out in the legislation and statutory guidance. It's important to understand that being convicted of an offence does not exclude a survivor from the scheme and every person applying will be assessed on an individual basis, including those who have committed offences. This is a part of the scheme that can be quite complex and we would be happy to provide more information on this for organisations supporting survivors. If anyone would like to have a follow up discussion about this topic, please contact [hello@redress.scot](mailto:hello@redress.scot).