

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

PO Box 24085; Edinburgh EH7 9EA

e-mail: information@childabuseinquiry.scot

INTERIM INTERVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

1. The primary purpose of these interviews with very elderly or seriously ill persons is to allow their evidence to be taken and recorded as soon as possible.
2. The interviews will be conducted by two legally qualified members of the Inquiry's in-house team. The arrangements for any particular interview can be adapted according to the needs or wishes of the person. An opportunity will be offered in advance to state any needs or wishes, and to ask questions, by telephone or by e-mail. All arrangements will be treated in the strictest confidence. Any written communications between the Inquiry and the person interviewed will be done using secure methods. The Inquiry will store all documentation on password protected secure systems.
3. The interviews will take place at the most convenient and suitable location for the person, possibly a hotel where comfortable accommodation will be provided. Interviews can take place with the person alone. Alternatively, one friend, relative or other supporter may be present during the interview.
4. The interviews will be audio recorded to ensure the Inquiry obtains an accurate record of the evidence. The audio recordings will be kept securely by the Inquiry, and will be destroyed at the end of the Inquiry process. No person from outside the Inquiry will have access to the audio tape without the written permission of the Chair. All notes taken at the interview, and other documents created during the Inquiry process, will have a witness code, rather than the person's name. The name of the person giving evidence under these arrangements will not be made public unless he or she consents to that happening.
5. The Inquiry regrets that it cannot provide any clinical or therapeutic support. It is still in the process of establishing support arrangements for witnesses. Careful consideration will be given in advance of each interview to any available and relevant views/information from people who are responsible for the care of, or close to, the person being interviewed. The Inquiry will attempt to gather information to assist it to make a careful assessment of each person's vulnerabilities before, during, and after the interview. No information will be obtained about someone interviewed under these arrangements without the person's consent.
6. The interviews will be conducted so as to obtain as much relevant factual detail as possible. The interviews will be conducted sensitively in light of each person's frailty and vulnerability. This will be at the pace required by each person, with comfort and other necessary breaks. The person interviewed will

be given every opportunity to give an accurate account in his or her own words.

7. It is the Inquiry's intention that each interview will be concluded with a carefully considered closure phase. The purpose will be (a) to recap on matters in the account that might be unclear; (b) to ask whether there are any questions and, if so, to answer any questions; (c) to explain how the evidence will be used; and (d) to discuss any immediate or follow up assistance that may be required.
8. The Inquiry will create a Witness Statement from what is said at interview. The person interviewed will have an opportunity to check and amend it. Once the Witness Statement has been signed, it cannot be withdrawn from the Inquiry process. Witness Statements will be published at some stage during the Inquiry process, but they will be anonymous unless the Inquiry is asked to assign the relevant name to the Statement (see above).
9. The person interviewed, and his or her supporter, may claim reasonable travel expenses.

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