



Interaction Action Plan Review Group

Dear All

As my time with the Forum comes to an end, I would like to thank all in the Interaction Action Plan Review Group for your support and openness. It has been a privilege to carry out this role on behalf of the Scottish public. I thank you all for championing the Forum, but particularly I thank all those survivors who have given me their trust.

For many years those who spent time in the institutions of Scotland struggled to have a voice, particularly when silenced by abuse and maltreatment. The work you do around this table is central to righting the human rights violations of the past. I am in awe of what you have achieved. It is often not easy and it can be hard to keep the faith but this group represents a historical landmark for justice.

I have the utmost respect for those who are able to acknowledge that what happened to many children in the past was not the way it should have been. It has been powerful to observe the impact of being heard and believed. Throughout my three years at the Forum I have built more support for participants, encouraged a culture of choice and control, and reduced barriers to taking part. I have encouraged engagement, clarity and trust through working closely with survivors and those with experience of care. Through faithful recording, the Forum is ensuring that future recommendations will be embedded in a deep appreciation of the personal experiences of those who lived through care. I believe for those whose records have been lost, altered or destroyed, truthful adherence to their personal voice is essential.

Within a landscape of national initiatives, the National Confidential Forum provides a unique opportunity for people to be heard without question or challenge. Yet there is still so much work to be done. I will support the transition to a new Head and look forward to seeing how the National Confidential Forum grows in visibility and impact. I will continue to champion the power of acknowledgement for those who have experienced harm in care.

In March I will take up a Senior Clinical Fellow post at the University of Edinburgh in the School of Health in Social Care. I will remain involved in the field and will continue to focus on historical abuse and trauma. And I will remain committed to the meaningful involvement of those with lived experience in all stages of the work. I look forward to our paths crossing in the future

Bearing witness to the experiences of those who have been through the Scottish care system has been an honour I will remember always.

Thank you.

Rachel

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