



Scottish Human Rights Commission An InterAction on Historic Child Abuse

Background

In 2004, the First Minister for Scotland offered ‘a sincere and full apology on behalf of the people of Scotland’ to those who had suffered abuse in residential care homes in the past. Since then, Scottish Government have progressed this in a number of different ways. In 2009, the Scottish Human Rights Commission (the Commission) produced an independent *Human Rights Framework* for remedies for historic child abuse in Scotland (www.scottishhumanrights.com). To secure progress in implementing the recommendations included in the *Human Rights Framework*, the Commission plans to hold interactions in 2012 with all of those who have a stake in the issue.

What is An Interaction?

A human rights interaction is a forum for independent mediation and resolution involving key actors in finding a way forward within a human rights framework. It is a process where those affected and those with responsibilities are directly engaged in addressing the issue requiring resolution, in this case, implementing the *Human Rights Framework* on historic child abuse. The purpose will be to develop an action plan outlining the agreed steps to advance the access to justice, a time frame within which steps will be taken and an independent monitoring process.

The InterAction will be facilitated by an independent Chair and will follow a FAIR framework:

- **Facts:** understanding the key facts, primarily based on views and experiences of those directly affected.
- **Analysis:** of the human rights at stake.
- **Identification:** of the common framework of shared responsibilities. Who should do what as an outcome of the InterAction.
- **Recall:** at a later date to ensure all agreed actions have been taken

InterAction is participatory in that those affected will be involved; principled in that it is based on the human rights framework; and pragmatic in that it recognises the practical restraints and is aimed at identifying achievable ways to advance human rights.

Preparing for the InterAction

The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children (CELCIS) has been commissioned to assist in the process of convening the InterAction. Moyra Hawthorn is the Principal Consultant, and is supported by a number of other colleagues.

This will involve identifying potential participants in the InterAction, and consulting with them to identify the best way in which they can take part in the InterAction.

We will use a variety of approaches; stakeholder events, questionnaires, written responses - any method will be considered which can practically support players expressing their views.

Who will be involved?

Individuals and organisations who have a stake in securing justice for historic child abuse will be welcome to participate in the InterAction. This will include adults who were in care as children, survivors' organisations, present and past service providers, staff and carers, local authorities, Government and other public bodies, and professional organisations.

When will this happen?

This will be taking place over the coming months with the first InterAction taking place in June 2012.

Where will this happen?

The location of the InterAction is yet to be decided. We do not wish to exclude people for any reason, and we will look at a range of methods to involve people.

Moyra Hawthorn/Andrew Kendrick, CELCIS
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