

11 September 2024

Commissioner seeks views on supports and services from victims and survivors of historical institutional child abuse

The Office of the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse wants to hear from victims and survivors of non-recent historical institutional child abuse on their experiences of supports and services and what they would like from services going forward.

Commissioner Fiona Ryan explained how the consultation which was launched on a pilot basis with victims and survivors earlier in the summer, has already provided valuable insights into victims and survivors' experiences of supports and services and their hopes and concerns for the future.

“We know from listening to victims and survivors that supports and services are important. What we did not know was how victims and survivors experienced services and what their expectations were of these supports and services in the future. So, we asked victims and survivors for their views, and they have been sharing them with us.”

“What the consultation is already telling my office is that victims and survivors have deep concerns about getting older; with particular fears about potentially entering residential care. By hearing from victims and survivors about their hopes and concerns in relation to services, we can bring these views to service providers and start important conversations about how best to support victims and survivors.”

The Office of the Commissioner is inviting victims and survivors to provide their views on their experiences of services - including GPs, hospitals, other health services, welfare and housing services and specialist supports, as well as sharing what they consider their needs and priorities are for the future.

The Commissioner is also establishing in parallel an Advisory Panel, which will consist of victims and survivors of non-recent/historical institutional childhood abuse, as defined by legislation. The panel will be a forum for consultation and discussion with the Commissioner, including on current and future services. It is hoped that the consultation will inform the work of the Advisory Panel and provide a solid evidence base for consideration.

The recruitment process for the Advisory Panel is now open and will remain open until 1 November. For anyone interested in applying, more information is available from AAB People which is undertaking the recruitment process on behalf of the Office of the Commissioner. Please contact Zara Mirza at zara.mirza@aabpeople.com or 028 9601 6146.

The Office of the Commissioner's consultation on services remains open for responses.

The survey is anonymous. It can be completed online or by phoning the Office of the Commissioner on 028 9054 4985. Victims and survivors will be supported to contribute to the survey over the phone. The Office of the Commissioner can also be contacted at info@cosica-ni.org. The online survey is available at <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/teo/cosica-services-survey/>

Ends.

For more information, contact Arlene O'Connor on 07736049754.