

Consultation on the proposal to develop an Acknowledgement and Accountability approach for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Summary Account of Acknowledgement and Accountability Consultation

Background

In September 2008, the Scottish Government went out to consultation with a proposal to establish a forum where survivors of abuse whilst in residential and other care settings could present their experiences.

The proposal followed a commitment by Scottish Ministers in February 2008 to establish a forum and sits alongside a variety of other initiatives to assist adults who had suffered childhood abuse in care, including a therapeutic support service designed specifically for them. (The term 'Acknowledgement and Accountability' was used in the consultation process but is provisional and may be changed if another title is regarded as more appropriate.)

The work is underpinned by SurvivorScotland, the National Strategy for Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse, www.survivorscotland.org.uk, which set out to address the effects, particularly of sexual abuse, while recognising that this often also encompasses a range of other forms of abuse. Its remit covers historical abuse, and it aims to enhance the health and wellbeing of survivors through improved self-care, community, primary and tertiary care.

The Consultation

The paper was developed with the National Reference Group, set up to implement the recommendations of SurvivorScotland. This group includes wide representation from agencies representing survivors and from individual survivors themselves. The consultation document was issued on 10 October 2008.

The consultation process was designed to draw on the views and experiences of survivors particularly and it was acknowledged from the start that more innovative methods were needed to ensure that this happened. A number of events were held with survivors and survivor organisations to raise their awareness of the consultation and engage them in discussions. Group and individual interviews were also carried out with survivors, facilitated by survivor organisations.

This first report provides a summary of the 51 responses that were received using the traditional consultation method (see Appendix 1 for detail). Thirty-five individual responses have already been posted on our Website, excluding 16 responses which the respondents asked to be treated as confidential.

We will be publishing two further reports from the consultation, one giving details of the views expressed at the events and the other presenting the results of the survivor interviews. In these ways we have sought to give voice to those 'silent' survivors who might not otherwise have the opportunity to present their views.

We are also taking on board national and international experiences to help us to continue to scope the best way forward for the future and have established contact with, for example, the work undertaken in the Irish Republic to assist 'in-care' survivors.

We thank everyone very much for their responses to this important and sensitive piece of work. We hope you will feel able to continue to help us in what is an important piece of work, and which will help shape the future for survivors in Scotland. All comments have been carefully considered and will be taken into account when moving forward.

Accessing responses to the consultation

We have made all non-confidential responses to the consultation available to the public at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/Recent>; however this has been dependent on respondents providing us with the necessary confirmation of their wishes, to ensure that individual confidentiality is maintained. The sensitive nature of the subject matter means that assurance of confidentiality is extremely important. Where we have removed any text, this has been due to the fact that it may have identified other individuals or bodies who had not given express permission to be named.

Endorsement of the Proposal Overall

Overall, respondents welcomed the opportunity to respond to the consultation and supported the introduction of a forum. This very positive endorsement of the proposal will enable us to move forward with confidence that this is what survivors want

Summary of Responses

1. Should Scotland trial an acknowledgement and accountability forum?

There was unanimous agreement from the respondents that it would be a good idea to trial an acknowledgement and accountability forum, in that:

- It would provide a valuable service that is not currently available.
- It reflects the needs of survivors and their strong desire to be heard and to have their experiences validated and acknowledged.
- It could help address issues from the past and potentially play an important part in a survivor's recovery process.
- There would be great scope for lessons to be learned to help shape future practice and to better safeguard people in care.

It was emphasised that any proposed Forum must be well structured and set up. There must be a clear framework and remit. At the same time, it was recognised that the Forum would not be suitable to all, and that some survivors would prefer not to be involved. It would be vital that the needs of these 'silent' survivors were recognised in other ways and that resources for them were maintained.

2. If so, do you think 'Acknowledgement and Accountability' is an appropriate title, or would you prefer other terms to be used?

The vast majority of respondents felt that the title 'Acknowledgement and Accountability' was not appropriate. The title was viewed by many as too professional a term. There was a clear desire for it to be more appealing and engaging to survivors. Having a briefer, simpler, and clearer title would help achieve this. It was also suggested that survivors themselves should choose the name since the focus of the Forum would be primarily on them and their needs. There appeared to be a general acceptance of the word 'acknowledgment', but an uneasiness/apprehension about the word 'accountability'. For many the word 'accountability' had connotations with the legal process/system and the allocating/assigning of blame and proof of guilt. This was viewed as conflicting with the primary aims of any proposed Forum which would to provide the chance to be heard and believed, and the opportunity for healing. Many felt that an affirming environment was needed in which all participants felt safe and comfortable/empowered to share their experiences, with no fear of being silenced and no fear of any repercussions.

Suggestions of alternative titles included:

- 'Acknowledgement, Accountability and Agreement'
- 'Historical, Acknowledgement and Accountability, Forum for children abused in Scotland's past care system.'
- 'Chance to be Heard' with a sub title of 'Acknowledgement and Accountability Forum for Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse.'
- Breaking the Silence [with a] sub title Acknowledgement and accountability for survivors of institutional childhood sexual abuse.

- No More Secrets
- No More Hurt
- Speaking Out
- Acknowledgement and Rectification Forum for Survivors of Historic Abuses
- Accepting the Facts and Taking Responsibility for Change
- Accepting the Facts and Changing the Future.
- Acknowledgement and Advancement
- Acknowledgement, Accountability and Future Forum
- Historical Abuse Acknowledgement and Gateway to Recovery Forum
- Truth and Understanding
- Truth and Mediation
- Truth and Move On
- Truth and Heal
- Perhaps Truth & Reconciliation might have more familiarity.
- "Respect" should be built in somewhere
- "Apology" should be built in somewhere

3. If you think it should be adopted, which of the following elements would need to be included in such an approach:

(a) Establishing a historical record as an act of remembrance.

There was majority support for the proposal to adopt a historical record for the following reasons:

- A public record would act as a validation for survivors and a confirmation of their experiences.
- It would help compensate for the poor state of record keeping that occurred in the past.
- The contents would allow individuals, institutions and policy makers to learn from past mistakes and contribute to improving practice in the future.

It was highlighted that a public record would need to be carefully managed and there would need to be guidelines agreed beforehand on what information should be included. Survivors in particular would have a significant role in this.

Some believed it should be anonymous to prevent naming, shaming, and blaming. Some respondents also felt the provision of a record should be optional as some survivors may not want their experience recorded.

In spite of this support, a minority of respondents felt that a public record should not be part of the Forum as:

- It may prevent survivors coming forward.
- The provision of a public record may not lend itself well to the Scottish situation where many survivors continue to suffer stigmatisation. It could exacerbate the problem.

A number of respondents were concerned that the term 'act of remembrance' could have misleading connotations. The term is linked in their minds with remembering the dead and bereavement which they thought was not relevant in this situation.

(b) Identifying for current institutions additional ways of safeguarding children and young people in care.

This element was seen as integral to any proposed Forum and received overwhelming support.

It was consistently highlighted that learning from the past could inform good practice for the future. The lessons from previous experiences could influence existing work on 'looked after' children, consolidate it and fill in the gaps.

Survivors were viewed as having a key role to play in explaining the obstacles and barriers that prevented them from divulging their experiences and highlighting what would have helped to protect them.

Furthermore, it was suggested that the possibility of protecting future victims could have a cathartic effect for survivors.

(c) Recognition of levels of accountability from the individual abuser through to Scottish society as a whole.

There was a clear split in the responses for this element. Those in favour felt that many parties had failed in their duty of care to protect children and should recognise their responsibility.

However while others saw this as an admirable goal, they felt that it was unlikely to be achieved as some parties would not be willing to accept responsibility. Some respondents, in particular, struggled with the idea of society recognising its collective accountability. They felt it would be difficult to achieve and might alienate those who would otherwise be supportive.

(d) Acknowledgement and apology.

The vast majority of respondents felt the element of acknowledgement would be an important part of the Forum. Acknowledgement carries sentiments of finally being believed after many years of denial by others and can be an important part in the healing process.

However it was clear there were mixed responses about the element of apology:

- Many believed that the element of apology, although potentially a very important step in the recovery process, would be difficult to attain in practice.
- Apologies could be forced or empty. (i.e. to avoid the consequences)
- The possibility of future litigation may inhibit organisations from making apologies.

- Some questioned the ability to apologise for past events when different people were in charge.
- Some felt an apology should principally lie with (be the responsibility of) the perpetrator of the crime alone.
- Consideration needs to be given to the difference between an apology by an individual and a general expression of regret by an organisation.

(e) Acceptance of levels of accountability from the individual abuser through to Scottish society as a whole.

There was a mixture of views about including this element within the forum process. It was highlighted that this was a very complex issue with many competing rights and interests to satisfy.

Those in favour agreed that as a concept this element was very important. A wide range of people were involved in the abuse of children, in a variety of different ways. As a result these parties should accept responsibility for their part in events that occurred.

However many had concerns with this element. Issues identified included:

- Acceptance of accountability could be a potential minefield.
- Accountability of parties may be diminished through 'sharing' of accountability. This cannot be allowed to happen – each party must be held fully accountable for their actions.
- The need to take account of context. Great care needs to be taken in applying today's standards retrospectively.
- There are various parties accountable but each is accountable in different ways.
- It is doubtful that society can be forced to accept accountability for something they may not have been aware of. Forcing accountability on the general public may cause resentment and alienate those who would otherwise have been supportive.
- A massive publicity campaign would be required before society could be expected to accept responsibility.
- Whilst society can recognise and acknowledge the experience (i.e. the abuse) it cannot be held accountable. Accountability lies with the abuser or institution involved.

- The determination and allocation of accountability should stay with the legal system.
- It would be a barrier to institutions and staff participating.
- The emphasis of the forum should be on reconciliation rather than accountability. Recrimination is not helpful. The inclusion of accountability maintains the discourse within a legal framework which is opposite to the aims of the proposed forum which is about healing and the chance to be heard and believed.

(f) Public recognition of the survivors' experience.

The majority of respondents who answered this question felt that public recognition of the survivors' experience would be a beneficial element to the forum.

The main reasons included:

- Public recognition of the survivors' experience would play a major role in the healing and recovery process of participants.
- Public recognition could be a useful way of highlighting positive outcomes and inspire others to come forward to seek help.

However a minority were wary of this element for a number of reasons:

- The issue of public recognition is potentially problematic and needs to be handled very carefully.
- Whilst public recognition may be positive for some, for others it could be detrimental.
- Survivors could feel labelled. Misconceptions and stigma are still prevalent; in particular, that abused children go on to become abusers themselves and this could result in further harm to survivors.
- Concerns that the confidentiality of survivors may be violated.

(g) Access for survivors to short, medium and long-term therapy and counselling as necessary.

There was widespread agreement among the respondents that this element should be included within the forum process. A model in which redress was conceptualised more widely than simple financial compensation was seen as beneficial.

Reasons included:

- The impact of abuse can be long-lasting and therapeutic interventions could be a valuable tool in ameliorating some of the effects.

- The forum process may re-awaken a range of memories which could cause distress to survivors. Therapy and counselling would provide support and help mitigate the risk of the forum process having a harmful effect on participants.
- Counselling could help survivors further rebuild their lives.

It was recognised that the forum would be ideally placed to signpost survivors to a range of different services. The importance of counselling being available prior, during and after the process, was also noted.

In spite of this support a few respondents felt that priority should be given to providing resources and funding to support services rather than the forum itself.

(h) Access for survivors to education and training to compensate for lost opportunity and to increase the likelihood of gaining employment.

There was widespread agreement from the respondents that this element should be included in the proposed forum.

Reasons included:

- Survivors are likely to have suffered interruptions to their education and training as a result of past abuse.
- The opportunity for education and training would enable greater employment opportunities for participants.
- Educational assistance could improve feelings of self-worth and self-confidence among participants.
- This could contribute to survivors re-building their lives.
- This is a vastly underfunded area so improved access would be very valuable.
- Survivors may not be able to address abuse related issues fully until the practical matters have been addressed.

The forum could play an important role in signposting participants to the various support agencies.

However a number of concerns were also highlighted:

- Survivors often suffer from long-term mental health, drug and alcohol issues which would need to be addressed before they would be able to cope with finding a job.

- This could inadvertently discriminate against those survivors who did not suffer abuse in residential organisations. It would be essential to ensure all survivors had access to the same opportunities.
- The provision of these services would need to be very carefully financed.

(i) Enhanced access to financial compensation for survivors.

There was a clear divide in the responses to this question. This highlighted the complexity of the issue. Those in favour felt:

- Existing compensation is insufficient.
- It is too difficult to discharge the burden of proof necessary through current legal avenues.
- The time-bar is unfair; survivors are denied true justice because of it.
- Many survivors have suffered severe financial implications as a result of their abuse. Financial compensation could give survivors security to improve life circumstances. It could alleviate much of the adverse circumstances experienced on a daily basis caused by financial poverty.
- Especially for older survivors financial compensation may be more relevant than access to education and training.

In spite of the support for financial compensation many felt that the forum should not be responsible for administering or providing this service. Claims should be independently assessed through a different procedure. It was felt this should be taken on by a body with a separate remit to the forum. One suggestion was the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority.

Conversely some respondents had serious concerns about the provision of financial compensation as part of the forum process:

- It would detract from the main focus of the forum.
- It could lead to unscrupulous referrals and false claims.
- Having compensation linked to the process would increase suspicions and doubt about the motives of the people participating. This could potentially cause participants further harm and lead them to be re-traumatised by the process.
- Financial compensation is not what the majority of survivors want. The chance to be heard is the main motivation.
- It would be a barrier to institutions attending.

- The ability to grant compensation should remain within the legal system.
- If enhanced access to compensation was provided for survivors of institutional abuse within the forum setting, this option would have to be made available to all survivors of abuse to prevent discrimination. This would be difficult to achieve.
- A true understanding of the realities of historical abuse in residential care can only emerge if compensation is not involved in the process.

4. Who would be eligible to apply and what criteria might be appropriate for determining which applications should succeed?

There were a range of views on who should be eligible to apply. Some believed the forum should have a very narrow focus and should only be available to those who have suffered abuse whilst in care.

Some of the main reasons included:

- There would be a danger of swamping/overwhelming the process if the forum is too open.
- By focusing on too many areas/groups you would not be making a real and meaningful difference to any. (we don't have infinite resources)
- Could be difficult to pigeonhole all groups of survivors within one specific forum setting due to the varying needs of different groups. The forum may be beneficial for survivors who suffered in care abuse but the process may not be constructive for other groups of survivors.
- By being more specific you would be able to better gauge the needs of and desire from other groups for the service.

Conversely, others felt the Forum should have a more open focus and should be available to all survivors of childhood abuse.

The main reasons included:

- All survivors of abuse are equally important and it would be unfair to single out one group at the expense of another.
- A narrow focus would risk survivors feeling unworthy, disbelieved and isolated.
- If survivors were ineligible this could make them feel failed by yet another system and suffering more feelings of rejection.
- There would be a danger of creating a two-tier system for survivors.

In terms of criteria there were a number of useful suggestions put forward. Some favoured more stringent criteria which would take account of legal and human rights issues:

- The forum should only be available to survivors with evidenced claims to prevent unsubstantiated allegations.

- The forum should only be available to survivors who are from an institute in which a history of abuse has already been identified.

There was recognition that there would need to be a balance between encouraging those who should apply and not encouraging false claims.

Conversely others felt the criteria for determining applications must not be onerous or overly complex and there should be no unnecessary barriers to participation. One suggestion put forward to ensure this openness would be to have one group where the legal facts had been established and one group where no charges had been made or proved. It would then be possible to tailor the forum process according to the type of applicant.

5. If you don't think that acknowledgement and accountability is the way forward, what would you like to see in place instead?

The vast majority believed the establishment of the Forum would be the best way forward. However there was a clear desire to ensure it would not be just another false promise.

In spite of this support, it was apparent many believed the Forum should not be the only option. Additionally there would need to be services and opportunities available for those who did not wish to access it. There was a belief the Forum should be only one option in a continuum of services.

Alternatively and/or additionally suggestions included:

- Increased CSA funding.
- An independent counselling service.
- National standards and process in the reporting of historical abuse (e.g. access to records, advocacy, and lead officer role and support processes).
- A consistent, clear and systematic approach to maintaining records and responding to allegations of historical abuse.
- Full judicial inquiry into historical abuse at various institutions/care organisations.

6. Available research emphasises the importance of having survivors shaping what a forum would look like and what it would do. Would you agree that this is the case and, if so, how best can this be achieved?

There was collective agreement that the survivors should be involved in developing and shaping the forum. Survivors should own the agenda since the forum is principally for and about them.

Some important points highlighted include:

- The process of shaping the forum could be distressing for survivors. Therefore appropriate support mechanisms and safeguards would need to be put in place to protect the interests and well-being/welfare of all participants.

- It would be important to acknowledge that survivors may have a range of different needs based upon their individual experiences, legal history, personal preferences and characteristics.
- In terms of reaching survivors it was recognised that a major challenge would be tapping into the silent majority in a helpful way.
- It would be vital for a representative number of survivors to be involved and not just a token number. This would ensure a broad range of views were considered/taken into account.
- Negotiations on procedural and process issues must not be protracted.

Suggestions for potential ways to reach survivors included:

- Via support agencies/groups –raise awareness through advertisements/leaflets; organise focus groups; distribute consultation papers, questionnaires and invitations to individual survivors.
- Via GP's
- Workshops – a way to bring survivors together across the country to share and discuss their thoughts, feelings and ideas and seek future participation.
- The Media – raise awareness and seek participation through radio, newspaper, and television advertisements and articles both at a local and national level.
- Online – awareness raising and possible online questionnaires and surveys delivered via appropriate websites.
- Via Social Networking Sites – such as Facebook or Bebo.
- Survivors from each institution could appoint representatives to speak on their behalf.
- Get advice from impartial bodies such as the Scottish Institute of Human Relations (SIHR) who have experience of working therapeutically with survivors. SIHR was actively involved in the development of children's panels in the 1970's.

7. What additional involvement should there be to help shape the forum?

It was clear the respondents felt there should be as broad a perspective as possible in helping to shape the forum. Suggestions included:

- Relevant support agencies/service providers (e.g. voluntary organisations, social work, criminal justice representatives, police)
- Institutions/ Care Providers / Representatives from the institutional care sector
- Ex-staff members from institutional settings
- Human Rights experts
- Members of the general public
- Researchers and academics in this field
- Royal Colleges & Professional Representative Bodies
- Seek advice and support from those with experience of similar Forums elsewhere in the world. (Directly involve people who have experience of similar Forums elsewhere in the world) (experts who have experience of the international examples cited)
- A national working group resourced from all sectors
- IT specialists
- Draw on the findings of the Tom Shaw Report (and other enquiries)
- PR advisors

8. The experience of other governments indicates that it is also important to involve family members. Do you agree and, if so, how can this be achieved, given that for some survivors, certain family members may be safe and supportive, others unsafe and unsupportive?

The majority of responses were weighted in favour of involving family members. Many believed that the participation of family members could be beneficial. However it was felt that involvement should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with survivors having a clear choice and final say in who, if anyone, should attend. It was also recognised there would need to be safeguards and support in place to ensure survivors made choices that were safe and in their best interests.

The process of Family Group Conferencing was highlighted repeatedly as a potentially valuable source of learning.

A minority of respondents were concerned that involving family members could be too risky and could have detrimental consequences for those involved. It was also felt that having family member involved would complicate matters and take the focus of the Forum away from survivors, for whom it is predominantly about.

One suggestion was that specific resources should be devoted separately to families and significant others.

Some also commented that there should be scope for family members to represent deceased or incapacitated survivors.

9. It is also essential to get accurate staff perspectives. How would we set about doing this?

Many agreed that getting accurate staff perspectives was vital to achieving a fair, balanced process, and to help learn from past mistakes and improve current

practice. However it was identified there could be a number of barriers to staff participation:

- Former staff may feel vulnerable to unfounded allegations.
- Institutions may fear future litigation.
- Former staff may have concerns about speaking publicly for fear of the consequences on their job, pension or other benefits they may be receiving.
- A fear that the process may become a quasi-court without the safeguards.

In spite of these barriers, a number of suggestions were put forward to help obtain accurate staff perspectives.

Achieving Staff Perspectives at Consultation/Design Stage:

- Use of press advertisement and agencies to contact staff (pro-active and awareness-raising).
- Focus groups or workshops may be beneficial to gain a more in-depth staff perspective.
- Issuing questionnaires.
- Anonymous contributions.
- Consultation with agencies that have experience of dealing with staff from previous investigations into historic child abuse.
- Draw on the findings of Tom Shaw's report.
- Allowing staff to elect representatives to speak for them.
- Seek the help of SIRCC to gather views.

Achieving Staff Perspectives at Forum Stage:

- A sensitive and non-fault approach to encourage staff participation.
- Indemnity/amnesty from future litigation.

Whatever the outcome it was highlighted that the safety and support of the staff participating would be extremely important.

10. Focusing on the mechanisms and process of the approach, who should lead the work and how should these individuals be appointed?

The majority of respondents agreed that the forum should be administered by a combination of independent professionals. It was seen as important that the Forum would be supported by, but independent of, the Scottish Government.

Suggestions of Who Should Administer the Forum Included:

- The Forum would need its own administration and its own chairperson.
- The Forum should be chaired by and constituted of professionals but also include survivors (or agencies representing survivors).
- A small commission which has the support of but operates independently from the Scottish Government.

- A committee comprising survivors, experts in a range of areas associated with sexual abuse and legal representatives.
- Utilise the expertise being gathered together to establish the task group recommended by the Shaw Report.
- Judicial experience may be appropriate to deal with the competing rights issues involved.
- There should be a representative from the Human Rights Commission.
- Use a similar model to that of the office of Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People. Could learn lessons and gain valuable insight from how this was set up.
- The lead should be from a non-departmental public body, for example linked to the Children's Commissioner or the Care Commission.
- Should be multi-agency led. Could utilise the expertise of Care Commission, Mental Welfare Commission or Survivors Scotland.
- SIRCC could lead on this work.
- Lead work should be carried out by individuals with relevant experience including: individuals from support agencies, ex-members of staff from institutions, members of the general public, human rights experts, representatives from the institutional care sector, and individuals representing the relevant government bodies.
- The provision of the service should be tendered from relevant agencies.

A detailed description of an initial structure which could be used to establish the forum was also offered by one respondent:

1. Chief Executive (Chair of Strategic Project Committee)
2. Co-ordinator Role
3. Administrative Support Role
4. Strategic Project Committee - decision making body with strategic key stakeholders and representation from each of the working groups
5. Advisory Group - the role of the advisory group would be to consider and discuss plans proposed by the Strategic Project Committee, provide information and advice to strengthen their aims and objectives, & assist in their implementation.
6. Working Groups - reporting to strategic project committee.

Suggestions of How the Individuals should be Appointed Included:

- The National Reference Group should appoint forum members with input from recognised Survivors' groups.
- Survivors themselves should be involved in the appointment process.
- Institutions should be involved in the appointment process.
- An advisory panel or steering group which includes survivors, representatives from institutions, and individuals with specialist expertise, knowledge and understanding in the field of childhood sexual abuse.
- Public appointment adverts with selection undertaken by specialist panel/s. The Children's Panel Advisory Committee was suggested as one kind of model.

Suggestions for the Necessary Qualities of Members of the Forum Included:

The lead should be a person of significant stature, moral authority and capable of commanding public respect. All appointees should possess the knowledge, understanding, skills and experience to enable them to competently deal with the complex issues involved. They must have the confidence and trust of survivors and have the availability of time commitment (have the time to commit fully to the process). Other qualities necessary include:

- Integrity
- Credibility
- Professionalism
- Compassion
- Impartiality

11. Testing out the approach in one geographical area may be an appropriate way to begin. What are your views on this?

A large proportion of respondents agreed that a test forum would be a good idea. They felt it would be a good way of raising public awareness, ironing out teething problems and identifying what improvements and adjustments would be necessary.

However at the same time it was highlighted that in order for the test-run to have a beneficial result:

- the area chosen would need to be representative,
- the test forum would need to be carried out with a level of resources which could be realistically replicated on roll out,
- there would need to be a robust evaluation process, and
- there would need to be a clear framework of timescales for set up, testing, evaluation, and national roll out.

In spite of this positive feedback some respondents did have concerns about basing the pilot in one geographical area:

- A minority felt it should be open to all from its inception in order to signify the seriousness and full commitment to the project.
- Narrowing down the process to one geographical area starts from a basis of exclusion from the beginning.
- It would be difficult to confine to one area.

Some alternative suggestions included:

- Basing/centring the test forum around a particular institution may be more practical than testing in a specific geographic region.
- Testing should be carried out in more than one area, for example one rural and one urban area.

12. Public awareness and understanding is critical. How do we go about achieving this?

There was universal agreement from the respondents that heightened public awareness and understanding would be vital in laying the ground for any such forum.

The suggestions for improving public awareness included:

- Utilising the media (advertising campaigns, articles in newspapers, local radio adverts, television documentary, soap opera storylines)
- National and regional campaigns (e.g. like 'See Me' or 'No Excuse')
- Leaflets and posters (in GP's/Health Centres, survivors agencies etc.)
- Educating the public (e.g. school campaigns)
- Improving the training of professionals (incorporation into training courses)
- Educating survivors (on the options available to them)
- Workshops, forums
- Improving the services available to survivors
- Scottish Parliament debate
- Launch by current First Minister
- Ministers promoting the Forum

In spite of this support there were a number of concerns highlighted by a minority of respondents:

- The sheer scale of education needed to raise public awareness would not be the best use of scarce resources in this field.
- A national publicity campaign would risk a large number of survivors coming forward at the same time thereby swamping the fledgling system.
- There is a danger of propaganda infiltrating into public awareness campaigns.

Appendix 1

Breakdown of the respondents:

- 11 individuals (2 legal; 2 social work; 1 mental health; 4 survivors; 2 unclear)
- 3 major non-governmental bodies/commissions
- 11 social work services
- 4 NHS general, or community health partnerships
- 7 voluntary sector-support organisations for adult survivors of CSA, rape crisis, or survivors of historic abuse.
- 2 advocacy services
- 3 general counselling agencies
- 4 royal colleges or professional representative bodies
- 4 children's support agencies or bodies
- 2 child protection committees

Suggest line up figures

Organisations

ADSW Residential Child Care Sub Group
 Angus Council
 Argyll & Bute Council
 Association of Chief Police Officer in Scotland (ACPOS)
 Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW)
 Barnardo's Scotland
 Break the Silence
 Care Commission
 Children 1st
 Children in Scotland
 City of Edinburgh Council
 East Renfrewshire Council
 Former Boys and Girls Abused in Quarriers (FBGA)
 Glasgow City Council
 Highland Child Protection Committee
 Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project (KASP)
 NHS Dumfries & Galloway
 NHS Mental Health and Wellbeing
 Open Secret, In Care Survivors Service Scotland
 Rape Crisis Scotland
 Renfrewshire Council
 Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP)
 Scottish Borders Council
 Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)
 Survivor Support
 The People's Advocacy Service
 The Scottish Institute of Human Relations (SIHR)
 Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar (The Western Isles Council)

Individuals

