

4 November 2016

Redress Scheme helps to enable access to justice for survivors of child sexual abuse

The Law Council welcomes the Federal Government's announcement to establish a redress scheme, which is crucial to ensuring that survivors can access justice for the abuse they have suffered.

The approach accords with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which called for a direct personal response to deliver justice for survivors.

The Law Council of Australia President Stuart Clark AM said the decision was a necessary one.

"Survivors of child sexual abuse have suffered injuries that are often uniquely severe and long lasting," Mr Clark said.

"In many cases survivors have not been able to receive appropriate redress or compensation and there has been a failure to recognise their significant trauma."

Prior to and throughout the Royal Commission's consultation and reporting on redress and civil litigation, the Law Council called for the development of a Commonwealth redress scheme. Support for a scheme was included in the Law Council's [2016 Election Platform](#).

"A government run redress scheme has greater capacity to be independent and transparent than institution run schemes, which is why it was recommended by the Royal Commission," Mr Clark said.

"The decision by the Commonwealth to be the funder of last resort is particularly welcome, because it will ensure that survivors can still receive redress even when an institution has closed or become insolvent.

"We are now calling upon States and Territories to work with the Commonwealth to "opt-in" to the Commonwealth scheme to ensure consistent and equal treatment for survivors of abuse.

"It is also vital that provision be made for additional funding for legal aid commissions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services, and appropriate community legal services to assist applicants in navigating the redress scheme," Mr Clark said.

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