



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01397

Name of petitioner

Mary Roy

Petition title

Future support of and funding for In Care Survivors Service Scotland

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to (a) recognise the ongoing needs of survivors of abuse in care (b) recognise the need for a specialised service as “in care” abuse issues are different and (c) therefore continue funding In Care Survivors Service Scotland for a further period.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

- Scottish Government, in funding the project initially for 3 years agreed with the partner agencies running ICSSS that it would be hoped local authorities would be able to fund the project after the initial 3 years. Partner Agencies have advised that the 3 year funding was intended to give time for project set up, delivery and to have time to source funding; it was not intended by Scottish Government or the stakeholder/partner agencies that the service would only be required for 3 years. There is an implication here, therefore, that Scottish Government, ICSSS and partner agencies recognise the long term needs of survivors of abuse in care. Unfortunately, due to the economic climate ICSSS were not able to receive local funding. Workers at ICSSS have all worked with local authorities on difference groups and forums.
- Three years on we have a better understanding of the needs of survivors of historical abuse in care and survivors believe that the Government, who ultimately placed children of yesterday in care, have a moral duty to provide a specific service which enables survivors to receive the long term help they need and have waited on for decades.
- In Care Survivors Service Scotland applied for Big Lottery Funding for main project costs beyond the initial 3 years. Although the Big Lottery said the application was very good and that ICSSS met criteria in improving lives of kinship carers, families, young people etc the focus for the Big Lottery Funding Application was really about returning to employment and services for young people. ICSSS have said due to long term trauma/mental health still to be worked on, people may not be ready for employment. The Big Lottery was apparently interested in the partnership for young people but this does not cover the average age for ICSSS service users.
- In Care Survivors Service Scotland completed Focus Groups with Service Users to establish why the service is of benefit and what is required for the future. This information is on the website and can be provided from ICSSS. The Focus Group results give strong evidence from the service users themselves about the need for the

service, rather than it being the workers who take that view without evidence.

- Other organisations affected by ICSSS providing a service (instead of putting pressure on their resources) already part fund the Partner Agencies core services, and therefore cannot fund ICSSS directly. For example, Open Secret and Kingdom Abuse Survivor Project (main partners) already receive funding from the Local Authorities and NHS for their core service for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. They therefore are unable to fund specific service for survivors of any form of abuse in care. We have to remember In Care experiences are very different.
- Service Users of ICSSS have all been asked to speak to their local MSP's and Provosts have recently been contacted and met with. MSP's will receive letters towards the end of May highlighting the plight of survivors who will lose the service of ICSSS and many have said verbally to staff and survivors that they are fully supportive of helping to raise awareness of these issues, considering also the cost savings.
- Letters of support and appeal are being sent by service users and survivors to all MSP's. Some service users have requested a meeting with Scottish Government Officials to tell them directly of the need for the service and this is taking place in June.
- ICSSS applied for small funding throughout the life of the project.

Petition background information

- There are 2 main reasons why the service should be funded for the future. The first is that there are service users who continue to require a specialised service from ICSSS because they recognise our needs and meet our needs, again see Focus Group input and evaluation reports. To remove this would make survivors of incare abuse invisible and unhealthy all over again. It is unethical to offer a service and then shut it down so soon. Trauma does not work this way. This is also in the context of survivors who did Time to be Heard being traumatised again and having the fear of ICSSS disappearing in a few months.
- The 2nd reason is that ICSSS is saving costs for other health organisations.
- Scottish Government will not fund ICSSS beyond October 2011. Focus Groups, consultations with service users found substantial evidence of why the service should continue. The service has also completed extensive evaluations and for example the counselling statistics show that 72% of service users to counselling have experienced an improvement to their health.
- The Government should understand that the psychology world documents that abuse/trauma in infancy and childhood affects all aspects of a child's development. Please note that I know 30% of service users have severe and enduring mental health problems which have not been treated by the NHS.
- ICSSS and survivors clearly understand the ongoing trauma related symptoms which affect their ability to engage in society, as is everyone's right. This includes access to employment, training and volunteering. It is clear that trauma is long lasting and that 3 years is not enough time to promote recovery, especially as many service users did not access the service from the very first day.
- Survivors are out there who have not accessed the service because they do not want to start receiving help for it to be taken away. This is backed up by the results of the Focus Groups. The self help group of survivors which is called INCAS has been reinstated and there were survivors from 28 to late 80's all looking for help from many different care homes. INCAS is a self help group and not professionally trained to offer therapy or advocacy.
- ICSSS must have saved NHS and other organisations because survivors no longer want to engage with psychiatrists (many have said that we should put the past behind us), and GP's have not provided the appropriate support – we need to build trust and GP's don't have enough time to build up trust and the NHS counselling is 10-12 sessions which is not enough.

- Survivors often highlight that ICSSS helps families which is important because it has a ripple effect. There are young people having to be carers to survivors, as seen in the papers recently. Survivors have found it challenging to raise their own children to be unaffected by their parents' trauma symptoms.
- The government recommends lessons should be learned from Time to be Heard, so that the State care is better for children of today. We agree with this. However, the Govt should recognise that adult survivors of in care abuse are yesterday's children who didn't have the opportunity of proper care.
- The Govt plans to offer a Confidential Forum/consultation to others from other care homes and yet they are not offering the same support from ICSSS for those who already participated in their consultation process for Quarriers and need to see that support through. The Govt must realise those people continue to be traumatised and some trauma has been increased since the consultations. It is unethical to expect survivors to go back to services they came from, when those services did not work for them.
- It is also false economy to start a National Project with start up costs and for it to end without survivors being helped to recover. For example, workers have been up-skilled to be more specialised in the help they offer, it has taken time to develop an infrastructure within the partners and to ensure the right staffing and much more importantly it has taken this time to begin to build trust with survivors of abuse in care. Networks are being built which took alot of time at the start of the project and workers, I understand, continue to receive requests for presentations and continue to receive referrals. Some are now word of mouth from other service users.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01397>

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