

**PE1596/L**

Scottish Government Letter of 25 November 2016

Thank you for asking the Scottish Government for further information about the In Care Survivor Support Fund (ICSSF) I am pleased to supply the following details:

### **Update On The Rollout Of The In Care Survivor Support Fund**

The Support Fund opened to all survivors on 29 September 2016. In its first two months of operation 85 people are registered and being supported by the Fund. This number continues to grow each week.

The fund does not operate a wholly medical model of support. A wide range of supports have been arranged by the fund in response to what Survivors have identified matters to them. The fund takes a person centred psycho/social approach which sees support tailored to the needs of the individual. For some survivors this may be access to counselling or trauma therapy and for others it may be advocacy support or peer group support. These examples are not exhaustive merely an illustration of the types of support provided through the fund. Through the fund survivors will also have access to a discretionary element which has enabled practical support such as access to higher education, supply of specialist healthcare equipment and essential household items.

Further to my previous update, Scottish Government and the Alliance Partners, Health in Mind, Penumbra, Mental Health Foundation and Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership continue to work closely with in care survivors to embed survivors experience in the continuous improvement of the Support Fund. This includes:

- Survivor representation on the governance board for the Fund;
- Survivor involvement in the development of communication plans and materials including leaflets, website and formal communication and engagement events; and
- The establishment of a survivor user panel. The user panel will work in partnership with those organisations delivering fund to capture learning and begin to put in place a process for continuous improvement based on survivor views and experiences of the fund.

### **Open Secret working with the Fund**

Open Secret's grant funding arrangements for ICSSS ended on 31st October 2016 following the opening of the new in care support fund. Scottish Government officials and the alliance partners continue to work together to facilitate and enable continuity for in care survivors receiving support from Open Secret. Through the new support fund an interim finance arrangement has been agreed that ensures in care survivors who are currently accessing support through Open Secret can continue to receive the support they need. Moving forward the Support Fund are working with Open Secret to identify and agree the service requirements so that Open Secret will operate as an ongoing service provider to the Support Fund.

In practice this means current in care survivors receiving support from Open Secret can be assured their support will continue uninterrupted. It also means that should survivors also wish to access wider support which is not available through Open Secret (such as the discretionary element) they will have the option of registering with the Support Fund. Many survivors currently receiving support from Open Secret have chosen to do this and have received additional support. Open Secret are facilitating this and supporting survivors in this process.

### **Access Criteria to the In Care Survivor Support Fund**

The Support Fund is available to people who experienced abuse or neglect whilst in care in Scotland. 'In Care' includes:

- living in residential care
- living in a boarding school (state, private or independent)
- staying long-term in hospital
- living in a Young Offender's Institution
- living in foster care

Abuse and neglect means being treated with cruelty or violence (it could have been a one off event or on repeated occasions); it may have been physical, emotional or sexual abuse, which has had a profound and negative impact on a person's life, their health and happiness.

It doesn't matter if:

- the abuse has been reported to the authorities (such as the police)
- there are current or past criminal or civil proceedings taking place, or
- a person has previously accessed other services.

Also:

- Even if a survivor no longer lives in Scotland they may still access the Support Fund.

### **Contact and Registration With The In Care Survivor Support Fund:**

Survivors do not apply to the fund. It is open to anyone who meets the eligibility criteria. Contact and registration with the Support Fund is straightforward. The Support Fund can be contacted by calling the freephone number 0808 164 2005 or by email using the web form on the Support Fund's website (<http://icssf.scot/>). Survivors may not wish to contact the Support Fund directly themselves, however, with their permission, others will be able to get in touch with the Support Fund on their behalf. This could be a relative, friend or support worker. There is also a dedicated professional referral telephone line where professionals such as social workers or GPs may also refer directly to the fund with the survivors' permission. To access the fund Survivors will be asked if they believe they meet the access criteria and only need to provide a name, contact details and location. Survivors will **not** be asked to give any personal history of the abuse they may have suffered.

Initial contact is intended to allow a member of staff from the Fund to help the Survivor, their family or friend, to learn more about the Fund and to answer any questions they may have about the fund. Following initial contact and with the

survivors' agreement a face to face meeting may be arranged to take forward how the fund can support the survivor.

I would be pleased to provide any further information on the Support Fund that the Committee would find helpful.