

PE1596/T

Petitioner submission of 18 May 2018

My thoughts and feelings of the service that provides survivors support through the **In Care Survivors Service Scotland (ICSSS)** have not changed.

It has now been just over 2yrs from when I gave a presentation at the Scottish Parliament, my thoughts and feelings have not changed. Survivors needs have not changed. I have met with survivors including new ones and professionals at a number of meetings and, when listening to them; their main concern is that the services that the ICSSS provides should continue, eg:

1) Long term one to one counselling: Survivors have been able to stop their sessions without the pressure of worrying that they have only a few left, this has opened the door for other survivors to get the help they desperately need. Most have been given short term counselling from the NHS: CBT Psychotherapy, which has caused survivors to be retraumatised because they have left feeling they needed more time to trust the counsellors which can take a longer period of time. Some have acknowledged that the NHS has been of some support, however, others have felt judged earlier on in the sessions and have left feeling, "where do I go now?"

2) Group work: Meeting with other survivors helps them understand that they are not alone, (this may sound like a cliché but those are the facts, I would ask anyone who is critical of group work and long-term counselling to attend a group (and counselling session) and listen to what survivors have to say. There can be a strong sense of trust, and friendships can be made. Many survivors have been rejected by family and "friends" and have been forced into isolation because they have very little or no choice about whom they can trust. ***For some of them group work is their first encounter with other survivors, they no longer feel isolated, they can (and have) shared their personal experience.***

3) Having one counsellor: This allows the survivor to have trust in one person to help them in other areas: advocacy, access to records, the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, helping with benefits, attending an appointment with their GP. Please remember, survivors find it very difficult to trust, their experience has shown that many have been seriously let-down by many people, family, "friends," some professionals. For them having one counsellor to help in a holistic way is far more reassuring.