



**Centre for excellence**  
for looked after children in Scotland



## SHRC InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

### Evaluation Report

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In 2004, following calls for justice from victims/survivors of abuse in care, the First Minister for Scotland gave an apology on behalf of the people of Scotland which acknowledged that some children in residential care had suffered physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Since this apology, a range of activity has taken place to address issues of historic abuse of children in care, including the *Historic Abuse Systemic Review* (Shaw, 2007), the setting up of the In Care Survivors Service Scotland, the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2014, and the establishment of a National Confidential Forum to hear the voices of adults who had experienced residential care as children.

In 2010, the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) carried out work to develop a human rights framework for the design and implementation of remedies for historic child abuse in Scotland (SHRC, 2010). While acknowledging the responses to historic abuse which had been taken forward, it called on the Scottish Government to adopt a comprehensive approach to ensure effective access to justice, remedies and reparation for childhood abuse.

Following on from the human rights framework for remedies for the historic abuse of children in care, SHRC developed a proposal for ‘(an) InterAction(s)’ to take forward this work and to agree an action plan to implement the recommendations of the framework. The ‘InterAction’ process itself was to take a human rights based approach.

A Human Rights Based Approach helps to integrate the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into everyday policy and practice and it can be applied to all areas of public life that affect human rights. Key principles at the heart of a HRBA are **Participation**, **Accountability**, **Non-discrimination** and **Empowerment**, and drawing directly from human rights Law (PANEL). The Commission has sought to integrate a HRBA into everything that it does in promoting awareness understanding and respect for human rights in Scotland, including in how it approaches the InterAction process.

The Commission’s working definition of a HRBA is: “giving people greater opportunity to participate in shaping the laws, policies and practices that impact on their human rights; increasing the ability of those with responsibility for fulfilling rights to recognize and respect those rights; and making sure they can be held to account. It also means ensuring non-discrimination, equality and the prioritization of the most marginalised.”<sup>i</sup> Therefore, the PANEL principles were embedded within the InterAction process from the outset.

The Commission also set about operationalising these principles through adopting what it has called a FAIR framework:

**F** – Draw out a full understanding of the **Facts**

**A** – **Analyse** what human rights are at stake

**I** – **Identify** what needs to be done and who has the responsibility for doing it

**R** – **Review** actions: Make recommendations for action and later recall and evaluate what has happened as a result.

Using the FAIR framework allowed the Commission to develop a shared understanding of the issues and their potential solution/s as well as provide a common framework to explore what change was needed and who had the responsibility for delivering that change.

In February 2012, SHRC commissioned the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to undertake the 'InterAction' project. The InterAction involved three full InterAction meetings along with a range of other meetings and events. The final, full InterAction meeting took place in October 2014, and a follow-up meeting for victims/survivors in December 2014.

### Research Aim and Objectives

The central aim of this research was to undertake an internal evaluation of the InterAction process and assess its effectiveness from the perspectives of all key stakeholders involved. The research included the views of survivors; representatives of survivors; agencies that had historically provided residential care for children; Scottish Government; professionals currently involved in the care of children; faith based organisations; and academics as well as the views of both SHRC and CELCIS staff who participated in the InterAction Process. The evaluation had four key aims, which were to:

- detail the stages in the InterAction process and the role of the various participants in different aspects of the InterAction,
- capture the experiences of the different participants: Review Group members; participants in the full InterAction meetings; participants in the broader range of InterAction meetings,
- identify those features which facilitated the process and those which hindered it,
- develop recommendations for policy and practice on the model of the InterAction.

### Research Methods

Information was collected by three primary methods, namely:

- documentary analysis (reports of meetings, minutes of InterAction, Review Group meetings, material produced for meetings),
- semi-structured interviews with 18 key stakeholders,
- an online questionnaire with 28 responses.

The research proposal was submitted to the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee and gained ethical approval in September 2015.

### Process of the InterAction

Two groups were established to support the InterAction project:

- A Project Team provided the operational and logistic support for the InterAction,
- A Review Group provided a strategic overview of the InterAction and acted in an advisory capacity. It was comprised of representatives of key stakeholders to the InterAction, including victims/survivors of abuse.

The preparation for the InterAction involved extensive engagement with the range of stakeholders. It involved setting up an infrastructure for engagement, identification of key stakeholders, preparatory meetings with stakeholders, identification of an InterAction chairperson, planning of the InterAction format and content, identification of venue and event.

The first full InterAction meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013, and the final InterAction meeting took place in October 2014. The InterAction involved three full InterAction meetings, four mini-InterActions, an up-date InterAction meeting, and four open meetings for survivors of abuse.

Over the summer of 2013, a draft InterAction Action Plan was written and shared with participants in the InterAction. A final version of the Action Plan was published in December 2013. Its stated purpose was to agree and coordinate steps to implement the recommendations in the SHRC Human Rights Framework, on the basis of the outcomes of the InterAction. It addressed two primary outcomes: Acknowledgement and Accountability.

At the InterAction meeting, the Cabinet Secretary set out a number of Scottish Government commitments to address the Action Plan. These included the development of a national Survivor Support Fund, commemoration, effective apologies and an Apology Law, work on civil justice and the time bar, and a consistent approach to investigating cases of historic child abuse. Later, in December 2014, the Scottish Government made a commitment to hold a Public Inquiry into Historical Child Abuse.

## Research Findings

Participants in the InterAction identified five key aims and objectives of the process:

- Develop an action plan to address issues of historic abuse
- Progress a human rights based approach to justice
- Bring together the key stakeholders
- Give a voice to the experiences of victims/survivors
- Learn the lessons of the past

Three-quarters of survey respondents considered that preparation for the InterAction was either helpful or very helpful, but it was acknowledged that those who entered the process late, did struggle to get up to speed quickly.

Information and communication was reported to be helpful or very helpful by over four-fifths of participants. However, the importance of timeliness of communication and ensuring that information was up-to-date was highlighted.

Feedback on the venues used for the InterAction meetings was mixed. Some venues worked well while others were less suitable, and some venues had both positive and negative features. A key issue to improve on, was building accessibility to facilitate participation.

Despite some tensions, the InterAction Review Group was seen as working well in providing advice and support to the InterAction project. The Review Group was made up of representatives of key stakeholders including survivors of abuse, and made a key contribution to the effective working of the InterAction.

Overall, the InterAction Full meetings were considered to have been positive with two-thirds of respondents considering that they had worked very well or extremely well. However, one view was expressed that they did not work well at all.

The consultation on the resulting Action Plan was generally seen to have worked well and the use of a range of methods for engagement allowed a broad range of individuals and agencies to comment on the Action Plan. However, some felt that engagement could have been wider still.

Given the contentious and sensitive nature of the discussions in the InterAction process, the relationships between the different participants was crucial to its success. A set of principles was shared amongst all participants at the start of (and throughout) the process, and all participants were asked to abide by these principles during the InterActions. These were:

- Do no harm
- Voice

- Being heard
- Respectful treatment
- Constructive engagement

Overall, working relationships across the different stakeholder groups were seen as positive, and this was essential to the effective working of the InterAction process. However, this was not the case across the board and some relationships were seen as negative, and support was not considered helpful. This raised the issue that the views of all stakeholders should be able to be heard and it is important to support participants to be able to do this.

Over half of the survey respondents considered that the InterAction had partly achieved its aims and objectives, and two-fifths considered that it had fully achieved them.

Respondents felt that three aspects of the InterAction process could have been improved

Communication and information

Organisation and timescales

Engagement with the InterAction

Survey respondents and those who were interviewed identified a range of achievements of the InterAction:

- the way in which the InterAction had brought key stakeholders together,
- creating a 'safe space' to take forward discussions of very sensitive issues.
- successful completion of the Action Plan
- taking forward a human rights based approach
- a distinctive contribution to progressing remedies for the survivors of historic abuse in care

### Key learning

Participants in the InterAction on the Historic Abuse of Children in Care were largely positive about the process and outcomes of the InterAction. However, there were tensions that arose throughout the process, and these impacted on the way in which some participants were able to engage with the InterAction, and their views on the effectiveness of the process. A series of transferable lessons are highlighted below:

- To allow for a strong participative process where all voices are heard takes time. As such the time and resources required for preparation for such an endeavour should not be underestimated and must be planned for;

- The research showed a good understanding amongst participants of the aims and objectives of the InterAction process, however, the process would benefit from timely reminders, especially to support those who join part way into the process.
- To be as successful as possible, this type of process takes planning. There should be a continual focus on preparation of participants for engagement with such an endeavour.
- Given the complexity and sensitive nature of many issues that an InterAction may be best placed to support, it is critical to ensure that information and communication is timely and up-to-date to enable participants to meaningfully engage.
- The Review Group for this InterAction was made up of representatives of key stakeholders including survivors of abuse, this made a key contribution to the effective working of the InterAction.
- In order to ensure as wide participation as possible, It is important to use a range of methods to engage with key stakeholders to enable them to take participate. Particular attention should be paid to accessibility (including physical access to venues as well as facilitating rural access to the process).
- The establishment of principles and ground rules for behaviour and attitudes is an important method to ensure respect for all is upheld. It is useful to remind participants of these principles throughout the process.
- The views of all stakeholders in an InterAction process should be able to be heard and their voices given equal value. It is important to support participants to be able to do this.

Overall, the model of the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care, a facilitated dialogue involving all key stakeholders, has shown how genuinely participative and empowering an approach based on a human rights framework can be. It has enabled the production of positive outcomes even when addressing contentious and sensitive issues, as noted by three participants below:

*"I feel hugely privileged to have been part of the process. And if it just makes one bit of difference the whole thing was worth it."* (Service provider representative - interview)

*"A very enabling constructive process."* (Survivor - interview)

*"Overall a very positive and meaningful process."* (Survivor - interview)



## Introduction

In 2004, following calls for justice from victims/survivors of historic abuse, the First Minister for Scotland gave an apology on behalf of the people of Scotland which acknowledged that some children in residential care had suffered physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and that they deserved *“full recognition by us of what happened to them’ and of the ‘burden’ with which they had to cope for the rest of their lives”* (Scottish Parliament, 2004). In addition to the apology, the First Minister set out proposals for a range of measures to address the needs of victims/survivors of abuse (Kendrick et al, 2015). A range of activity has taken place to address issues of historic abuse of children in care, including a review of the regulatory framework for residential child care from 1955 – 1995 (Shaw, 2007), the establishment of the In Care Survivors Service Scotland to offer counselling and support to victims/survivors of abuse, a review of record keeping legislation which led to the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2014, and the establishment of a National Confidential Forum to hear the voices of adults who had experienced residential care as children.

In 2010, the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) carried out work to develop a human rights framework for the design and implementation of remedies for historic child abuse in Scotland (SHRC, 2010). It drew on international rights law as well as the views of victims/survivors and other key stakeholders in Scotland. While acknowledging the responses to historic abuse which had been taken forward, it called on the Scottish Government to adopt a comprehensive approach to ensure effective access to justice, remedies and reparation for childhood abuse. As part of this the Commission recommended that the Scottish Government should:

- ensure full and effective participation of survivors and others whose rights are affected in all decisions on the means of realising the rights of effective access to justice, effective remedies and reparation;
- ensure accountability for human rights violations including through effective official investigations, or a mechanism capable of determining State liability, and prosecutions where appropriate;
- consider further the role for accountability in the successor(s) to the Pilot Forum, in particular considering the inclusion of investigatory powers sufficient at least to establish a record of the truth, and to identify where reasonable grounds exist for effective official investigations, as well as supporting survivors to identify and access effective remedies and proportionate reparation according to their needs and wishes;

- ensure effective access to justice through identifying and addressing barriers which survivors of childhood abuse face in practice in exercising this right, making necessary adjustments or developing new mechanisms as required;
- develop as effective as possible a reparations programme for survivors of historic childhood abuse. This should include restitution, adequate compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition. The reparations for individuals should be appropriate for each individual, and based on the principles of proportionality (according to the nature of the violation and the harm done) and participation (of survivors to identify their needs and wishes);
- consider the development of legislation to facilitate apologies by institutions;
- make available each of the elements of effective access to justice, effective remedies and reparation to all survivors of childhood abuse without discrimination;
- develop a comprehensive communications and outreach strategy to raise awareness of past and present childhood abuse, the human rights of all of those affected and the remedies available;
- explore with survivors and others, support which would enable them to participate effectively in the Pilot Forum and its successor(s), including advocacy and psychological support, protection and alternative means of testifying, taking reasonable steps to provide necessary support to participation.

(SHRC, 2010)

Following on from the human rights framework for remedies for the historic abuse of children in care, the Commission developed a proposal for '(an) InterAction(s)' to take forward this work. To secure progress in implementing the recommendations included in the Human Rights Framework were plans to hold (an) InterAction(s) in 2012 with all of those who have a stake in the issue. The purpose of these interactions was to agree an action plan to implement the recommendations (SHRC, 2012).

The proposal called for preparation of an 'InterAction' involving the development of a risk assessment strategy and project plan, preparatory meetings with relevant individuals and organisations to discuss issues and mechanisms for effective engagement. An appropriate Chair was to be identified, an outline for the 'interaction' drawn up, and an appropriate venue located. The proposal also expected the provision of support for the delivery of 'interaction' which would involve: acting as convenor for the 'InterAction', overseeing

practical logistics, and “acting as the “host” whilst facilitating an atmosphere of trust amongst all participants” (SHRC, 2012).

The ‘InterAction’ process itself, took a Human Rights Based Approach. Such an approach supports the integration of the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into everyday policy and practice and it can be applied to all areas of public life that affect human rights. Key principles at the heart of a HRBA are **Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination and Empowerment**, and drawing directly from human rights **Law** (PANEL). The Commission has sought to integrate a HRBA into everything that it does in promoting awareness understanding and respect for human rights in Scotland, including in how it approaches the InterAction process.

The Commission’s working definition of a HRBA is: “giving people greater opportunity to participate in shaping the laws, policies and practices that impact on their human rights; increasing the ability of those with responsibility for fulfilling rights to recognize and respect those rights; and making sure they can be held to account. It also means ensuring non-discrimination, equality and the prioritization of the most marginalised.”<sup>ii</sup> Therefore, the PANEL principles were embedded within the InterAction process from the outset.

The Commission also set about operationalising these principles through adopting what it has called a FAIR framework:

- **F** – Draw out a full understanding of the **Facts**
- **A** – **Analyse** what human rights are at stake
- **I** – **Identify** what needs to be done and who has the responsibility for doing it
- **R** – **Review** actions: Make recommendations for action and later recall and evaluate what has happened as a result

Using the FAIR framework allowed the Commission to develop a shared understanding of the issues and their potential solution/s as well as provide a common framework to explore what change was need and who had the responsibility for delivering that change.

In February 2012, the Commission contracted the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to undertake the ‘InterAction’ project. The initial timescale for the project was four months with an anticipated completion date of June 2012. As will become apparent, the duration of the project was much longer than this, and involved three full InterAction meetings along with a range of other meetings and events. The final, full InterAction meeting took place in October 2014, and a follow-up meeting for victims/survivors in December 2014.

## Research Methods

### Introduction

In 2015, following the completion of the InterAction process, the Commission and CELCIS wished to gauge the effectiveness of the InterAction process, and to gain the perspectives of participants in the InterAction about their involvement in the process and their views about its success in achieving its aims and objectives.

In order to maximise limited resources, it was agreed that this research would be carried out by Andrew Kendrick and Samina Karim. It, therefore, must be acknowledged that this is an internal evaluation of the InterAction process. However, there has been a clear focus in this report of fully representing the range of views – positive and negative – about the different aspects of the InterAction process and the factors which facilitated or hindered the effectiveness of the InterAction.

The central aim of this research was to undertake an internal evaluation of the InterAction process and assess its effectiveness from the perspectives of all key stakeholders involved. The research included the views of survivors; representatives of survivors; agencies that had historically provided residential care for children; Scottish Government; professionals currently involved in the care of children; faith based organisations; and academics as well as the views of both Commission and CELCIS staff who participated in the InterAction Process.

The evaluation had four key aims, which were to:

- detail the stages in the InterAction process and the role of the various participants in different aspects of the InterAction,
- capture the experiences of the different participants: Review Group members; participants in the full InterAction meetings; participants in the broader range of InterAction meetings,
- identify those features which facilitated the process and those which hindered it,
- develop recommendations for policy and practice on the model of the InterAction.

It was considered important that the perspectives of the different participants should be reflected in the research, and this included CELCIS and the Commission. The Commission proposed and funded the InterAction, as well as being important participants in the process itself. Similarly, CELCIS, as well as facilitating the InterAction, was a stakeholder in its own right, having an important role in the development of services for children in care in Scotland.

Information was collected by three primary methods: documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews, and an online questionnaire.

### Documentary Analysis

The InterAction process produced a wide range of documentary material. This included:

- Reports of Interaction meetings
- Reports of related meetings (e.g. mini-InterActions, open meetings)
- Minutes of InterAction Review Group Meetings
- Material produced for meetings (e.g. presentations, handouts, etc)

This material was used to describe the process and content of the InterAction meetings and events, and to identify issues which arose throughout the InterAction.

### Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with key individuals in the InterAction process: members of the InterAction Review Group, and stakeholders involved in the InterAction. In all, 18 interviews were carried out involving three survivors, two CELCIS representatives, two SHRC representatives, one Scottish Government representative, six representatives of service provider organisations, and four other participants in the InterAction.

The questionnaire is provided at Appendix 1.

### On-line Questionnaires

On-line questionnaires (using Qualtric) were sent to all participants in the InterAction process for whom we had up-to-date contact details. A number of professionals had moved on to new posts for whom we did not have current email addresses.

The online questionnaire followed a similar structure to the interview questionnaire.

In total, 56 questionnaires were sent, and 28 were returned, a response rate of 50 per cent (Victim/Survivor = 3, Service Provider = 7, Other professional<sup>1</sup> = 8; SHRC = 1; CELCIS = 4; Scottish Government = 1, Other = 4)

### Ethics

The research proposal was submitted to the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee and gained ethical approval in September 2015. The ethics application addressed issues of: informed consent; anonymity and confidentiality; protection from harm; research objectives

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<sup>1</sup> A range of professionals were involved in the InterAction process apart from representatives of service provider agencies. These included representatives of professional bodies, survivor support agencies, and national organisations.

and methodology; recruitment of participants; data collection, storage and security; potential risks or hazards.

Individuals approached to take part in interviews were provided with project information sheets and asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 2).

## Process of the InterAction

### Introduction

As stated above, SHRC commissioned the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to undertake the InterAction project in February 2012. The project was managed by Andrew Kendrick, School of Social Work and Social Policy (SWSP) and Moyra Hawthorn, CELCIS, University of Strathclyde.

Two groups were established to support the InterAction project.

A Project Team was set up consisting of three staff members from SWSP, two staff members from CELCIS, and two external consultants. The Project Team provided the operational and logistic support for the InterAction, with support from the CELCIS Events Team.

A Review Group was established to provide a strategic overview of the InterAction and to act in an advisory capacity. It was comprised of representatives of key stakeholders to the InterAction, and the initial membership included: two victim/survivor representatives of In Care Abuse Survivors (INCAS) and Former Boys and Girls Abused at Quarriers (FBGA), CELCIS, SHRC; Scottish Government; Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW – later to become Social Work Scotland); and Education Through Care Scotland (ETCS). Over the period of the InterAction, two more representatives of victims/survivors of abuse were invited on to the Review Group. It was chaired by Andrew Kendrick and met nineteen times between May 2012 and March 2015.

### Preparation

The preparation for the InterAction involved extensive engagement with the range of stakeholders involved in historical child abuse in order to facilitate involvement and participation in the process.

Through 2012, preparation for the InterAction involved: setting up an infrastructure for engagement (web page, dedicated email and telephone, admin staff), identification of key stakeholders, preparatory meetings with stakeholders, identification of an InterAction

chairperson, planning of the InterAction format and content, identification of venue and event planning.

Learning point: To allow for a strong participative process where all voices are heard takes time. As such the time and resources required for preparation for such an endeavour should not be underestimated and must be planned for.

Outlined below are the main events held as part of the InterAction process, although there were a wide range of other individual and group meetings held with the various individuals and organisations involved in the InterAction.

### First Full InterAction

The first full InterAction meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013 in the Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. The meeting was chaired by Prof Monica McWilliams<sup>2</sup> (independent chair) and involved 50 participants, including representatives of victims/survivors, agencies that had historically provided residential care for children, Scottish Government, professionals currently involved in the care of children, faith based organisations and academics.

The report of the meeting stated that four broad themes emerged from discussions and it was agreed that these should form the framework to take forward the work of the InterAction.

- Empowering people to know and claim their rights
- Acknowledgement of victims/survivors experiences
- Ability of public and private bodies to deliver human rights based justice and remedies
- Accountability for historic abuse

The report also stated:

*The day concluded with a clear desire and commitment among participants to continue working together. A high level of mutual respect and constructive discussion was evidenced throughout the day.* Feedback on the day indicates that participants generally found this to be a positive opportunity to progress a very sensitive agenda.

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<sup>2</sup> Monica McWilliams is Professor Women's Studies at the University of Ulster and the Transitional Justice Institute. Between 2005 and 2011, she was Chief Commissioner for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. She served as a member of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland from 1996 to 2003. She was an elected member of the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations and a signatory to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in 1998. During the negotiations following the Agreement, she was the Chairperson of the Human Rights Sub-Committee until 2003.

### Mini-InterActions and Victim/Survivor Open Meeting

Four Mini-InterActions were held between May 2013 and June 2013 in order to allow participants in the first InterAction meeting opportunity to discuss issues in more detail. An average of 12 participants took place in each of the mini-InterActions which covered the topics of: Acknowledgement and Apology; Reparation; Inquiry; and Access to Justice. A report of each of the mini-InterActions was produced and the discussions were summarized and fed into the second InterAction meeting.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June, an open event for victims/survivors of abuse was held and there were 20 participants in total. The event explored the identified themes and produced much discussion. It was acknowledged that the themes overlapped and were interlinked and therefore could not be looked at in total isolation.

The report of the event states that feedback from the meeting indicates that participants generally found this to be a positive opportunity to work towards further developing the plan to deliver justice for victims/ survivors of historic abuse. There was detailed discussion of: acknowledgement and apology, reparation, inquiry, and access to justice.

Strong themes which emerged throughout the day included the importance of acknowledging that victims/ survivors are individuals with disparate needs; that they should be empowered to choose from a range of options including access to justice and reparation (e.g., education, medical services, counselling and long-term therapy, respite care, compensation). There should also be a focus on accountability and the improvement of current and future services for children in care. In conclusion, a high level of mutual respect and constructive discussion was evidenced throughout the day. The summary of the discussions from the Open Event was presented to the second InterAction event which took place on the 20th June 2013.

### Second Full InterAction

The second Full InterAction meeting took place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 in the Insight Institute, University of Strathclyde. It was chaired by Prof Monica McWilliams and involved a similar range of participants as the first Full InterAction (for the most part, these were the same individuals).

Following a recap of the outcomes of previous meetings, participants worked in small groups of between seven and eight with a facilitator to address the themes of Acknowledgement and Apology, Reparation, Inquiry and Access to Justice. After a summary of the discussions, next steps for the InterAction were agreed:

- SHRC will draft an Action Plan as a result of this InterAction process. This will then be shared with the participants in August 2013 for comment and clarification, before it is placed in the public domain.



- The Action Plan will then be placed in the public domain in order that survivors and those who have responsibility for taking action can contribute to its development.

The report of the meeting concluded that a high level of mutual respect and constructive discussion was evidenced throughout the day, and that a great deal had been achieved in terms of consolidating ideas and opinions and moving the process forward. It was acknowledged that there was still much to consider and participants would continue to be involved during the next stages of the InterAction.

### InterAction Action Plan and Consultation

Over the summer of 2013, a draft Action Plan was written and shared with participants in the InterAction. A Victim/ Survivor Open Event to allow a wider group to comment on the draft Action Plan.

Following this consultation and revision, a final version of the InterAction Action Plan was published in December 2013. Its stated purpose was to agree and coordinate steps to implement the recommendations in the SHRC Human Rights Framework, on the basis of the outcomes of the InterAction. It addressed two primary outcomes: Acknowledgement and Accountability, and within each of these outcomes, there were a number of commitments.

**Outcome 1 stated that acknowledgement of historic abuse of children in care and effective apologies are to be achieved and the commitments to be delivered were that:**

1. barriers to effective apologies from those with historic responsibility for child care in Scotland are increasingly removed, including through a full consideration of the merits of an Apology Law.
2. in establishing the National Confidential Forum, every effort will be made to consider how this might contribute to establishing a national record.
3. consideration will be given to appropriate forms of commemoration, guided by the views of victims/survivors.

**Outcome 2 stated that accountability for historic abuse of children in care will be upheld, including access to justice, effective remedies and reparation, and the commitments to be delivered were:**

1. there should be a review of the lessons learned from previous inquiries and related processes such as the Historical Abuse Systemic Review. The review should consider

what added value a National Inquiry on Historic Abuse would have, and should scope the potential costs.

2. the civil justice system should be increasingly accessible, adapted and appropriate for survivors of historic abuse of children in care, including through the review of the way in which “time bar” operates.
3. there should be a nationally consistent and appropriate approach to the investigation and prosecution of offences relating to historic abuse of children in care.
4. reparation: Options for the development of a national survivor support fund should be explored with all of those affected, including victims/survivors, public, private, voluntary and religious bodies, local authorities and others affected.
5. empowerment: Survivors should be supported to understand and access the range of measures of in this Action Plan.
6. records: the outcomes of the on-going review of record keeping and access to historic records should be considered in the implementation and review of this Action Plan.

The Action Plan was put out to consultation in December 2013 and the consultation continued to April 2014. It was distributed to a wide range of individuals and organisations. In total, there were 42 responses to the consultation: 37 written responses and five responses by telephone. Half of the responses (22) were from survivors or survivors’ organisations – In Care Abuse Survivors (INCAS) and Former Boys and Girls Abused of Quarriers Homes (FBGA). There were responses from ten Local Authorities, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service (COPFS), Police Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability (SCLD), Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service, Sisters of Nazareth, Child Migrants Trust, CHILDREN 1st and Kibble Education and Care Centre (CELCIS/SHRC, 2014)

The responses to the consultation on the Action Plan have shown support and commitment to the process of the SHRC InterAction on Justice for Victims of Historic Child Abuse, and to the outcomes and commitments required to take forward justice for survivors of historical abuse in care. In general, the Action Plan was welcomed by respondents and seen as a step forward in the way that Scotland responds to the historical abuse of children in care.

There was overall support for the need for effective apologies and for the consideration of an apology law. Responses emphasised the need for meaningful apologies, and for this to be achieved highlighted how apologies needed to be accompanied by action to put things right. The National Confidential Forum was generally considered to be a positive step in providing a place to hear the experiences of a wide range of individuals who had been in residential care and resided in institutions. A number of responses, however, called for a more inclusive approach to take account of the experiences of those in other care settings such as

‘boarding out’ or foster care, adoption, and kinship care. Commemoration of historical abuse of children in care was supported and the importance of survivors deciding on the most appropriate forms of commemoration was emphasised.

There was general agreement about the need for a review of the lessons learned from previous inquiries. There were a range of views about how this should be taken forward. Half of the survivors who responded to the consultation called for a ‘full public inquiry’ or a ‘judicial inquiry’. A number of respondents considered that further consideration was needed to decide whether a national inquiry was the most appropriate way of doing this. There was strong support for the commitment to improve access to civil justice and many respondents called for the need to address the ‘time bar’.

The investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of historic abuse of children in care was highlighted by respondents, and seen as being paramount by some survivors. A consistent approach to investigation and prosecution was called for, and guidance and support for survivors involved in the court system.

There was clear support for a national reparation fund to provide financial and other forms of support to survivors of abuse. This was linked to wider needs for support and a number of responses commented on the need for specialist services and resources to address the particular needs of survivors of historical abuse in care. Respondents considered that the empowerment of survivors of historic abuse was absolutely central to the process of acknowledgement and accountability, and this draws on the human rights based approach which emphasises the empowerment of rights holders to know and claim their rights (SHRC, 2010). The direct participation of survivors in the decision making about the full range of issues was emphasised.

There was a clear response about the importance of access to records; both the needs of adults who had experienced care in the past, and current record keeping for children in care and the implications for future access to records.

### Third Full InterAction

The third full InterAction meeting took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2014 in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. It was chaired by Prof. Alan Miller of the Scottish Human Rights Commission. The purpose of the meeting was to share the commitments to the implementation of the InterAction Action Plan and to take this forward via further group discussion. There were 53 participants, again covering a similar range of stakeholders as had participated in the previous InterAction meetings, and for the most part involving the same individuals. In addition, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Michael Russell, the Minister for Children and Young People, Aileen Campbell, the Minister for Community Safety and

Legal Affairs, Roseanna Cunningham, and the Minister for Public Health, Michael Matheson, attended for part of the InterAction Event.

At the InterAction meeting, the Cabinet Secretary set out a number of Scottish Government commitments to address the Action Plan. These included the development of a national Survivor Support Fund, commemoration, effective apologies and an Apology Law, work on civil justice and the time bar, and a consistent approach to investigating cases of historic child abuse. On the issue of a Public Inquiry, he stated that this had not been ruled out. Michael Russell confirmed these commitments in a Parliamentary statement, on 11 November 2014, including a confirmation that there would be a decision on a Public Inquiry by Christmas 2014.

While the Action Plan calls on a range of stakeholders to make commitments to address the rights of survivors, the focus in this InterAction meeting was the commitments made by Scottish Government, and the lead that it was taking in addressing the issues raised in the Action Plan.

Following the full InterAction meeting, a follow-up open meeting of victims/survivors was held in December 2014.

### [Victim/Survivor meeting with Ministers](#)

As part of the process of the InterAction, it had been agreed that an open meeting would be held with victims/survivors in order to feedback to a wider group the commitments made at the full InterAction meeting and give victims/survivors an opportunity to give their views. The Cabinet Secretary for Education requested that Ministers be allowed to attend the meeting in order to engage with survivors and hear their views. The open meeting was arranged for the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014. It was attended by approximately 30 victims/survivors and by the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Angela Constance; the Minister for Children and Young People, Aileen Campbell, the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Paul Wheelhouse, and Fiona McLeod, MSP). The discussion focused on the Scottish Government commitments and, in particular, the scope, purpose and format of a public inquiry.

This was the final meeting of the formal InterAction process.

On 17 December 2014, the new Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Angela Constance, on behalf of the Scottish Government, made a Parliamentary statement announcing the Government's intention to hold a Public Inquiry into Historical Child Abuse.

## Research Findings

### Aims and objectives

As noted above, the InterAction had stated aims and objectives. In the proposal for the InterAction these were set down as:

*To secure progress in implementing the recommendations included in the Human Rights Framework the Commission plans to hold (an) interaction(s) in 2012 with all of those who have a stake in the issue. The purpose of these interactions is to agree an action plan to implement the recommendations (SHRC, 2012).*

This is explained further in an information document for the InterAction which states:

*A human rights interaction is a forum for independent mediation and resolution involving key actors in finding a way forward within a human rights framework. It is a process where those affected and those with responsibilities are directly engaged in addressing the issue requiring resolution, in this case, implementing the Human Rights Framework on historic child abuse. The purpose will be to develop an action plan outlining the agreed steps to advance the access to justice, a time frame within which steps will be taken and an independent monitoring process. (CELCIS/SHRC, 2012)*

This said, the participants in the InterAction were asked what they considered the aims and objectives were. The key participants who were interviewed were asked an open-ended question on what they considered the aims and objectives of the InterAction to be, and from their answers, a list of aims were identified and included in the survey of participants.

Table 1: Aims and objectives of the InterAction (n=28)		
	No.	%
Develop an action plan to address issues of historic abuse	24	86%
Progress a human rights based approach to justice	23	82%
Bring together the key stakeholders	22	79%
Give a voice to the experiences of victims/survivors	21	75%
Learn the lessons of the past	18	64%

It is unsurprising, then, that the aim of developing an action plan was identified by all of the respondents in the survey, and this was also highlighted by a number of those who took part in interviews:

*"[The aims and objectives] were primarily to draw up an action plan based on the needs of survivors at the forefront of it."* (Survivor - interview)

*"To create an action plan for justice and access to justice for survivors."* (Other professional - interview)

Drawing on the basis of the InterAction in a human rights framework, this was also frequently identified as an aim of the InterAction by most survey respondents.

*"What I saw the aims and objectives as being, was the unique opportunity for survivors, care providers and former care providers to sit down together and develop a shared perspective of the issues around historic abuse from a human rights perspective which was distinctive."* (Scottish Government representative - interview)

This quote also refers to the bringing together of key stakeholders and this was identified as a distinctive aim by most of the survey respondents. It was also frequently referred to by those who were interviewed.

*"To draw together key stakeholders from across Scotland; anyone who would have a reasonable, relevant contribution to make".* (Survivor – interview)

*"It was about harnessing partnership from all the stakeholders."* (Service provider representative - interview)

*"An experience for providers, institutions and everybody to come together to look at how we could all work for the survivors and how we could take things forward with the voice of survivors in mind."* (Other professional - interview)

Providing a voice for victims/survivors was also identified as an aim and objective by three-quarters of the survey respondents, and some of those interviewed.

*"To bring survivors together to be able to bring one strong voice..."* (Other professional - interview)

However, interview respondents also viewed the InterAction as providing an opportunity for the voice of providers of services, as much as for survivors.

A lesser proportion of survey respondents (64 per cent) identified learning lessons from the past as an aim of the InterAction, and in the interviews, it tended to be service provider representatives who mentioned this.

*“From my own perspective, they were around learning, about what we can learn from what’s gone before, about what went wrong so we don’t make the same mistakes and do better.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“For service providers to hear directly from survivors of historic abuse to see what we could learn from the past for today’s practice and to see how we could address people’s concerns.”* (Service provide representative - interview)

Some of the individuals who were interviewed, particularly those who became involved in the InterAction part way through, acknowledged that it took some time to catch up with what the aims and objectives were and one suggested:

*“I’m not sure if they were clear to me to begin with. I don’t think that was a bad thing as it allowed the process to be formed as it went along.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

Finally, one interviewee questioned whether the InterAction had any purpose other than:

*“... to say that we had an interaction that we brought people together under a human rights framework.”* (Other professional - interview)

Learning Point: The research showed a good understanding amongst participants of the aims and objectives of the InterAction process, however, the process would benefit from timely reminders, especially to support those who join part way into the process.

### Preparation for the InterAction, Information and Communication.

One of the reasons that the InterAction took longer than was initially anticipated, was the realisation that there needed to be extensive preparation for the InterAction meetings, involving a range of meetings with different stakeholders in order to ensure that participants had a common understanding of the purposed of the InterAction.

Overall, participants considered that the preparation they had received for the InterAction had been helpful.

Table 2: Preparation for the InterAction (n=27)		
Very Helpful	9	33%
Helpful	12	44%
Neither	5	19%

Unhelpful	1	4%
Very Unhelpful	-	-
	27	100%

Those who were interviewed expressed a range of views and some considered that preparation for the InterAction was good:

*“It was really good. There was lots of resources provided in time and everything was explained that was going to happen in time.”* (Other professional - interview)

*“Preparation wasn’t extensive but it didn’t need to be. Prior to the start of the interaction I understood what was going to be involved.”* (Survivor -interview)

Those who came into the InterAction at a later stage found it more difficult to feel prepared:

*“No preparation, just go to the meeting and pick it up - It could have been better from my organisation.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“Trying to get up to speed was a bit of a challenge. We were given information but it was about getting that to the right person in time to get them to prepare for it. We were prepared as well as we could have been.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

Learning point: To be as successful as possible, this type of process takes planning. There should be a continual focus on preparation of participants for engagement with such an endeavour.

Information for the InterAction and communication was also generally felt to have been positive, over four-fifths of respondents felt that information was helpful or very helpful and three-quarters that communication was good or very good.

Table 3: Information during the InterAction (n=26)		
Very Helpful	8	31%
Helpful	14	54%
Neither	3	12%
Unhelpful	1	4%
Very Unhelpful	-	-
	26	100%



Table 4: Communication during the InterAction (n=26)		
Very Helpful	6	23%
Helpful	14	54%
Neither	4	15%
Unhelpful	1	4%
Very Unhelpful	1	4%
	26	100%

Respondents in the interviews commented on the range of information provided for the InterAction meetings.

*“It was good information, good PowerPoint, good reports coming out.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“I thought it was really good. It captured the broad range of views from all the parties, in particular it captured survivor views really well.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“Within the confines of the format, I suppose it was ok.”* (Other professional - interview)

Particular aspects of information were identified which it was felt would have been useful for the meetings, for example, the historical context to abuse in care.

*“Broadly fine, although I would have found it useful to have more facts and figures. About provision - in terms of background, it would have been useful to have information on how institutional care has changed over the years. The context of where historic abuse took place. Any background information which can root you into what we are dealing with would have been helpful.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

Similarly, communication in the InterAction was felt to have been generally good but there were particular aspects which some respondents felt could have been improved, for example, the timeliness of communications and updates to the website. Interview respondents were asked specifically about the InterAction website, emails and notification of emails.

The InterAction website was considered a useful resource by some, both for InterAction participants and in order to allow a wider audience to access the information.

*"I've referenced it a few times and sent links to others, and found things easy to find." (Service provider representative – interview)*

*"I didn't turn to it for information, but we linked it to our group for others to be able to access the information." (Survivor - interview)*

However, some were not aware of it or had considered that it did not work as well as it could have done.

*"Didn't know about it and didn't go on it." (Service provider representative - interview)*

*"I did use it a fair bit but felt frustrated it wasn't updated. Having the headlines up from the interaction meetings would have been good (within a day or two) between minutes being published." (Service provider representative - interview)*

Similarly, communication by email and notification of meetings was generally considered to be fine by stakeholders who were interviewed.

*"Good advance notification of meetings, with supporting documents, which you want for preparation being provided." (Service provider representative - interview)*

However, there was an acknowledgement that sometimes notice might be short and that there could be delays in the circulation of information.

*"I recognised that they were working within tight timescales. Sometimes there were things that inhibited how much notice could be given. By in large good notice was given." (Service provider representative - interview)*

*"Not always timely enough, but maybe because of pressures at work delaying minutes." (Survivor - interview)*

Learning Point: Given the complexity and sensitive nature of many issues that an InterAction may be best placed to support, it is critical to ensure that information and communication is timely and up-to-date to enable participants to meaningfully engage.

## Venues

Feedback on the venues for the InterAction was mixed. The three InterAction Full Meetings took place in the Marriott Hotel, the Insight Institute (Collins Building) and the Mitchell

Library. Survivor Open Meetings, and other meetings such as the Mini-InterActions and Review Group meetings took place in various rooms in the University of Strathclyde. Some venues worked well while others were less suitable, and some venues had both positive and negative features. This is reflected in the survey responses where the majority considered that venues were ok.

Table 5: Venues for InterAction Meetings				
	Full Meetings		Survivor Open Meetings	
	No	%	No	%
Very good	6	24	2	14%
Good	16	64	5	36%
OK	3	12	7	50%
Poor	-	-	-	-
Very poor	-	-	-	-
Total	25	100	14	100%

Respondents in the interviews reported that the venues were generally acceptable:

*"They were good. The Mitchell Library was good. And the one at [the Collins Building] was a good space."* (Survivor - interview)

*"The Mitchell library was wonderful, really warm and quite stimulating."* (Survivor - interview)

*"Varied – the last one being in the Mitchell library which was a serious civic building which struck the right note for that final critical interaction. The ones before were either at the University or hotels of which neither were absolutely ideal but worked well enough."* (SHRC representative – interview)

Some participants, however, pointed out that there were issues with disabled access and access to toilet facilities at the Mitchell Library and at some of the other venues in the University. There were also issues with hearing loop systems not working in some University venues:

*"No hearing loop where some people needed it."* (Survivor - interview)

*"... we struggled with... the Mitchell library with all the steps; although it's a wonderful historic building and very fitting."* (CELCIS representative - interview)

Rooms for other InterAction events were also seen as 'functional':

*“Venues were reasonable. None of them were absolutely brilliant but it’s about making the best of what you’ve got.” (Service provider representative – interview)*

## Methods of working

In terms of the process of the InterAction, and the methods of working, we identified three key aspects: the Review Group; InterAction Full meetings; and the Consultation on the Action Plan.

## Review Group

Table 6: Methods of Working: InterAction Review Group (n=15)		
	(No)	%
Extremely Well	4	27%
Very Well	6	40%
Moderately Well	5	33%
Slightly Well	-	-
Not Well at all	-	-
Total	15	100%

As stated above, the Review Group provided a strategic overview of the InterAction and provided advice and made decisions about the format, content and structure of the InterAction process. It involved a range of stakeholders including survivors and service providers. Survey respondents considered that it had worked well, for the most part. Given the sensitivities of the issues being considered, it is unsurprising that, at times, discussions could be very tense, and this was reflected in the minutes of meetings. However, members of the Review Group who were interviewed considered that it was of central importance to the effectiveness of the InterAction and that it had worked well.

*“Initially people may have been a little unsure about what their role was and what their expectations were of one another. Through time that settled itself out. We also considered what the purpose of the review group was, and as time went on we saw how thoughts and ideas from the review group influenced how the interaction meetings or mini-interactions were carried out.” (Service provider representative - interview)*

*“It was effective, structured yet relatively informal in its character so people could say what they wanted to say.” (Scottish Government representative - interview)*

*“It worked well and involved a mix of backgrounds and [with] the anchor being inspirational survivors. It remained intact through to the end and transformed into another form of group that would engage with accountability. Those participating*

*saw it as being worthwhile and something that should be continued to serve another purpose.” (SHRC representative - interview)*

*“[It worked] very well. A very cohesive group, quite reflective, with everyone having a chance to speak.” (Survivor - interview)*

Learning Point: The Review Group for this InterAction was made up of representatives of key stakeholders including survivors of abuse, this made a key contribution to the effective working of the InterAction.

### InterAction Full meetings

At the core of the whole process were the Full meetings of the InterAction which gave all those stakeholders who were involved.

Table 7: Methods of Working: InterAction Full Meetings (n=22)		
	(No)	%
Extremely Well	6	27%
Very Well	8	36%
Moderately Well	7	32%
Slightly Well	-	-
Not Well at all	1	5%
Total	22	100%

These were considered to have worked very well overall, with almost half of survey respondents stating that they worked ‘very well’ and a third stating that they worked ‘extremely well’. For the most part, those who were interviewed considered that they worked well. One person interviewed, however, considered that the approach taken towards survivors of abuse at the meetings:

*“made it very difficult to have the depth of discussion which I think is necessary for this issue” (Other professional - interview).*

It should be acknowledged that one stakeholder perspective, representing residential child care workers, was not at all positive about the process of the InterAction, and did not feel their views were being taken on board in the same way as those of survivors of abuse.

Others interviewed were more positive:

*“I think they worked really well. A focus and determination to make sure that everyone had a say and were listened to no matter how challenging that may have been for the respective people. A commitment in the group to acknowledge what*

*had happened in the past and work together to protect people in the future.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“I think it worked surprisingly well. I’ve still got really strong memories of the first meeting with the presentation from the Northern Ireland chair and the head of the SHRC were both very powerful inputs and set the scene really nicely. I thought the survivor groups may potentially have been more hostile but I was impressed with how they interacted and how they were all there in a very constructive sense.”*  
(Service provide representative - interview)

*“They were enabling. I was able to be clear with others about who I was representing, what I was speaking about and what our expectations were.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“The round table approach was good; I always felt I was placed at the right table. Most people responded well to each other. The stimulus for the conversation was always there.”* (Survivor - interview)

Those who were interviewed also commented on the Victims/Survivors Open meetings which gave opportunity for a wider group of survivors to be involved in the InterAction discussions. These were seen as challenging but effective in giving a wider group of survivors a voice:

*“They definitely gave survivors an opportunity to share what they feel and what they were looking for and wanting.”* (Other professional - interview)

*“In some ways more challenging because of the disparate nature of the survivor community...They were difficult meetings but very important. Those who had been sceptical about the process wanted to be part of it by the end, which showed success of the process.”* (SHRC representative - interview)

*“They worked. No cause for concern.”* (Survivor - interview)

## Consultation

The Action Plan was put out to consultation in December 2013 and the consultation continued to April 2014. It was distributed to a wide range of individuals and organisations.

**Table 8: Methods of Working: Consultation on the InterAction Action Plan (n=22)**

	(No)	%
Extremely Well	2	9%
Very Well	12	55%
Moderately Well	7	32%
Slightly Well	1	5%
Not Well at all	-	-
Total	22	100%

The consultation was generally seen to have worked well and allowed a broader range of individuals and agencies to comment on the InterAction Action Plan.

*“Very helpful again because it’s really important to have everything on paper to see how we are going to go forward in making it and developing it for survivors”. (Other professional - interview)*

*“It was fine. It’s an independent consultation coming out, I think it would have been good to have figured out a way of massively raising awareness of the fact that this consultation is really important and what the implications are”. (Service provider representative - interview)*

Learning Point: In order to ensure as wide participation as possible, It is important to use a range of methods to engage with key stakeholders to enable them to take participate. Particular attention should be paid to accessibility (including physical access to venues as well as facilitating rural access to the process).

## Working relationships

Given the contentious and sensitive nature of the discussions in the InterAction process, the relationships between the different participants was crucial to its success.

Before the first full meeting of the InterAction, a set of principles were circulated by the Chair of the InterAction, Prof. Monica McWilliams. These highlighted the importance of how participants in the InterAction related to each other and that:

*“The path to a successful outcome will depend on participants feeling satisfied that they have been heard and fairly treated, and that their human rights have been respected”.*

Participants were therefore asked to respect the following principles:

- **Do no harm:** Everyone who participates in the InterAction process must recognise the fundamental importance of doing everything we can to ensure no-one is harmed as a result of taking part.
- **Voice:** Everyone needs time to explain their perspective which may involve giving a personal or organisational narrative. Participants will be treated with respect and allowed to have their voice heard.
- **Being Heard:** The term ‘historic abuse’ implies that this is in the past. For those participating in the InterAction, the consequences are very much in the present. Each participant will take time to hear what participants say and to take this seriously.
- **Respectful Treatment:** Participants will treat each other with politeness, courtesy and consideration at all times.
- **Constructive engagement:** To achieve the purpose of the InterAction, which is to develop an Action Plan to advance justice for victim survivors of historical child abuse. Participants will engage in negotiations constructively and will give serious consideration to the feasibility and appropriateness of further steps.

Learning point: The establishment of principles and ground rules for behaviour and attitudes is an important method to ensure respect for all is upheld. It is useful to remind participants of these principles throughout the process.

Survey respondents were asked about their relationships with victim/survivors, CELCIS, SHRC, Current and former providers, and other professions involved in the InterAction. It can be seen from Table 8, that overall working relationships were considered to be positive.



Table 9: Working Relationships in the InterAction					
	Victims/ Survivors	SHRC	CELCIS	Service Providers	Other Professiona l
Very Positive	7 (27%)	11 (42%)	12 (46%)	8 (30%)	6 (22%)
Positive	15 (58%)	10 (38%)	12 (46%)	16 (59%)	18 (67%)
Neither	3 (12%)	4 (15%)	2 ( 8%)	3 (11%)	3 (11%)
Negative	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	-	-	-
Very Negative	-	-	-	-	-
Total	26 (100%)	26 (100%)	26 (100%)	27(100%)	27 (100%)

Relationships with victims/survivors of abuse in care were generally viewed as positive although one survey respondent considered that they had been negative. This majority view of the positive nature of the relationships was expressed by those people who were interviewed.

*“Constructive and positive with those who I spoke with. But I came in after the group was significantly established. The survivors participated in a very respectful, thoughtful and considered way and there was no animosity. There was huge dignity in the way they worked with ourselves.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“I hadn’t really come into survivors groups before and it was positive. Some of them were rightly critical,... I was able to form relationships with people who I hadn’t known before the InterAction.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“I was trying for consistency and transparency in my interaction with survivors and in return I felt an incredible sense of dignity and of compassion and respect. On that basis I felt the relationships I had with particular survivors were absolutely critical to the process. And I valued their support”.* (SHRC representative – interview)

*“Rather positive and productive. They felt I was doing a reasonable job for them.”* (Survivor - interview)

There was, however, acknowledgement that, at times, relationships could be more tense and confrontational.

Relationships with other stakeholder groups were also considered to be very positive:

*“We had a very honest debate with provider organisations, for example, about the need for an inquiry. We’ve become involved with a task group with a particular provider organisation.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“Overall a healthy process. We’ve made joint and independent responses in this whole process. It made us aware who the key players are and oiled the contact in the process.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

As well as asking about working relationships, survey respondents and interviewees were also asked about the support they received specifically from CELCIS and SHRC. The survey responses are detailed in Table 10 and can be seen to be generally helpful, though one respondent felt that the SHRC contribution had been unhelpful. Another person interviewed did not feel supported by either organisation and indeed stated that they felt patronised by SHRC.

These participants, who were representing the perspective of residential child care workers, did not feel positive about their engagement with the InterAction. This could have been addressed in a more proactive way.

Table 10: Support from SHRC and CELCIS through the InterAction (n=26)		
	SHRC	CELCIS
Very Helpful	9 (35%)	10 (38%)
Helpful	11 (42%)	9 (35%)
Neither	4 (15%)	7 (27%)
Unhelpful	1 ( 4%)	-
Very Unhelpful	1 ( 4%)	-
Total	26 (100%)	26 (100%)

Learning Point: The views of all stakeholders in an InterAction process should be able to be heard and their voices given equal value. It is important to support participants to be able to do this.

Most stakeholders who were interviewed, however, were very positive about the contribution of SHRC and CELCIS:

*“I couldn’t help but be impressed by the chair and the SHRC’s approach. I think it was well coordinated.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“[Support from SHRC was] absolutely wonderful. Here was an agency that was beginning to frame in their minds exactly what we were trying to say, and they were understanding us.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“I think largely the support was quite positive, down to the fact that CELCIS and Strathclyde did a lot of good work in making and sustaining relationships with individuals. They were quite considerate and person centred.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“I think this very complex process was managed extremely well by all the agencies involved.”* (Service provider representative - survey)

Similarly, when discussing working relationships, the stakeholders who were interviewed were overwhelmingly positive.

*“I would say very good with CELCIS. Very impressed by the SHRC.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“A very open and honest relationship with each other. We haven’t always agreed with each other but we have been able to say that in a professional way.”* (Scottish Government representative - interview)

*“A very good relationship with the SHRC. I think they’ve been really supportive.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“It worked so well and we established a really good rapport. The element of trust was very tangible.”* (Survivor - interview)

### Extent to which InterAction Achieved Its Aims and Objectives

Over half of the survey respondents considered that the InterAction had partly achieved its aims and objectives, and two-fifths considered that it had fully achieved them.

Table 11: Extent to which InterAction Achieved Its Aims and Objectives (N=28)		
	No	%
Fully achieved	11	39%
Partly achieved	15	54%
Did not achieve	2	7%
	28	100%

A wider range of views were expressed by the key stakeholders who were interviewed for the study.

Most of the other stakeholders interviewed considered that the InterAction had achieved its aims to a greater or lesser extent:

*"I think it did. Some people may not think it did. I think the SHRC handled it really well with a hugely respectful tone. It was very skilfully done engaging a whole range of people really well."* (Service provider representative - interview)

*"I think it achieved those objectives around bringing all the parties together."*  
(Survivor - interview)

Some of those interviewed acknowledged that the InterAction was only the start of a process and that there is still uncertainty about the longer term outcomes of justice for survivors of abuse:

*"It was aiming to start something and not finish something. It was starting a process which it was successful in doing."* (Service provider representative - interview)

*"I think it did, but we seem to have been left in limbo"* (Survivor - interview)

One person interviewed did not think that the InterAction had achieved its aims and objectives:

*"I'm not convinced it did. I think it was a phoney piece... I think the whole process was deeply flawed."* (Other professional - interview)

This reflected one particular perspective which has been noted above and which considered that the InterAction process did not give due weight to all viewpoints.

Finally, two of the key stakeholders considered that the InterAction had surpassed its aims and objectives:

*"I would say so yes. I think it went beyond these aims and objectives. For the first time, we had been able to meet face to face with people who had provided care; that was a monumental step forward. The approach taken by the SHRC was one of very gradual cautious steps forward making sure everyone was safe, respected and listened to... By allowing us to express ourselves safely and freely they definitely did achieve their aims and objectives."* (Survivor - interview)

## Ways in which the InterAction could have been Improved and been More Effective

The survey followed up the question about achievement of aims and objectives by asking open-ended questions to ask in what ways it was not successful in achieving its aims and

objectives and ways it could have been improved. Those people who were interviewed were also asked these questions. There were four main areas which were identified, and some of these have already been reflected in the comments above. These were: communication and information, organisation and timescales, engagement in the InterAction, and what has happened since the end of the InterAction.

### Communication and information

It was suggested by some of the respondents that communication in the InterAction could have been more focused, and information could have been provided in more accessible formats with the avoidance of jargon:

*“The InterAction term was confusing and the language used in the materials was jargonistic.”* (Other professional - survey)

*“Consistent dissemination of information in easy read formats.”* (SHRC representative - survey)

It was also suggested that:

*“Written contributions from participants might have allowed original ideas to have been shared by everyone.”* (Other respondent – survey)

### Organisation and timescales

We have seen that the InterAction process took almost two years, although it had been originally planned for a significantly shorter period. Respondents identified this as an issue, both in organisational terms and in terms of the impact of the length of time that the InterAction process took.

*“Spread over too long a time. Links between the processes/stakeholders and why in a flow chart would have been helpful plus a clear timeline.”* (Other professional - survey)

The issue of the timescales was also acknowledged by a member of CELCIS staff.

*“The biggest bit of learning for us is around the length of time it would take to bring people together and effect change. I’m not sure if knowing that would have made it more effective but I think it would have been helpful to know.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“It was perhaps apparent from the start that the original timescale was unrealistic. A great deal of preparation and discussion was needed to get everyone to the right*

*place to move on to the next stage of the InterAction. This had to be done with limited resources. That said, the InterAction did get to where it needed to get.”*  
(CELCIS representative - interview)

It was also felt that the organisation and communication for the InterAction could have been ‘tighter’ and it was considered that at times the InterAction was not as focused as it could have been:

*“I felt sometimes we lost focus and it seemed the action plan was a little bit separate to the meetings. The debate around the action plan could have been part of the main meetings and felt a little bit of a parallel process.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

### Engagement with the InterAction

Two aspects of engagement with the InterAction process were highlighted. The first concerned the way in which information about the InterAction process was disseminated to a wider audience, including the public at large. It was felt that beyond the immediate participants in the InterAction, there was a lack of knowledge and awareness of the process being undertaken. Also a range of organisations or individuals were suggested who could have contributed to the InterAction: police, prison service, chief executives of local authorities, or regulators. There was also comment that there could have been a better representation of providers.

*“It was very difficult to engage with the full range of stakeholders out with the InterAction Full meetings, and this meant that not all stakeholders were in agreement. This, however, was probably always going to be the case.”* (Survey respondent)

*“I think more could have been done with the media to tell people that this process was going on. And for other professionals to know. I think it was reasonably well known within small circles but not enough awareness raising on a societal level.”*  
(Service provider representative - interview)

The limited geographical spread of participants in the InterAction was raised by one person:

*“... it was based in the central belt and that wasn’t a representative sample”*  
(Survivor - interview).

Another aspect of engagement which was raised concerned the impact of people who came into the InterAction part way through and who approached the meetings in a more

confrontational way than had been experienced in previous InterAction meetings. One meeting in particular was identified as ‘very challenging’:

*“That was probably the most difficult moment, and required some rebuilding of confidence afterwards.”* (SHRC representative - survey)

Finally, a representative of one stakeholder group, residential child care professionals, did not consider that the InterAction process had allowed for their contribution to be heard.

*“There were certain things you weren’t allowed to say and certain things that were frowned upon... There was a lot of resentment from residential care workers that they were being put into a particular corner.”* (Other professional - interview)

### What has Happened Since the InterAction

The InterAction process itself concluded in December 2014, and many of the comments concerning the effectiveness of the InterAction concerned what has happened since the formal conclusion of the InterAction. As a number of respondents said, the InterAction was the start of a process.

*“It was aiming to start something and not finish something. It was starting a process which it was successful in doing.”* (Service provider representative)

However, once the InterAction process itself was ended, concern was expressed about the implementation of the action plan:

*“There was no timeline, everything remained open ended where we didn’t know when things were going to be implemented.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“Many of the elements of the InterAction Plan lacked clarity and actual details of how these would possibly work in practice.”* (Survivor – survey)

*“Some uncertainty remains about the way forward.”* (Other professional - survey)

These issues were also raised in respect of how the InterAction could have been improved:

*“By having defined and clear timelines for implementation of the individual elements of the Action Plan, also by having real clarity of how such elements of the Interaction Plan were going to be progressed and implemented. In addition how the various elements would work in practice. A number of issues were vague throughout, despite seeking clarity.”* (Survivor – survey)

Particular aspects of the InterAction Action plan were highlighted. The national inquiry was a matter of debate within the InterAction through to the final stages, and this was reflected in comments:

*“Not sure everyone felt they got a satisfactory way forward. Opinions were split and still are about the value of a government inquiry”. (Service provider representative - survey)*

Similarly, there was mention of challenges in implementation in relation to reparation and compensation, the survivor support fund, and time bar legislation.

While these comments have focused on the content of the discussions and the Action Plan, there was also some concern expressed about the subsequent loss of the principles which had underpinned the process of the InterAction and which many felt had contributed to its effectiveness.

*“The principles agreed by all sides during the InterAction do not seem to be reflected in the developments taking place”. (Service provider representative – survey)*

*“As far as I can tell, the positive relationships built in the interactions have been somewhat forgotten in the move towards a formal inquiry. However, the interactions did appear to contribute a less hostile atmosphere than in England and Wales, at least in the run-up to formal enquiry. My fear is that this will be lost once a formal enquiry gets underway - there is evidence that this is already happening. This suggests that a collaborative, non-adversarial approach can't be grafted on to a conventional judicial process.” (Survey respondent)*

One person who was interviewed posed the questions:

*“Where do the relationships made go, what are the next steps for working together? It's out of our hands now”. (CELCIS representative - interview)*

### **Achievements of the InterAction**

Survey respondents and those who were interviewed identified a range of achievements of the InterAction. Ahead of all the others was the way in which the InterAction had brought key stakeholders together, and a number also highlighted the way in which the InterAction created a 'safe space' to take forward discussions of very sensitive issues.

*“It achieved a bringing together of survivors and organisations/institutions in a way which was very different; and it's an example I've used subsequently with people as how can we in Scotland address thorny issues. If you can create a safe space and get*



*people to sit round the table, without blame to say how we can we make things better; I have enormous confidence that we as a country can do that.” (Service provider representative - interview)*

*“Achieved bringing disengaged parties together. By breaking boundaries and barriers down.” (Survivor - interview)*

*“The full InterActions surprised most participants. Nearly all had previous experience of events where people behaved defensively, obstructively, aggressively and/or cynically. As a starting point I believe most participants had a temporary experience of a collaborative approach to very difficult subjects. Survivors appeared touched by people's interest; providers by their perspective being acknowledged”. (CELCIS representative – survey)*

Creating a space for survivors to have their voice heard was also mentioned

*“Provided the survivors with a voice, a sense of value, respect and dignity and enabled them to see they were "not alone".” (Survivor - interview)*

*“To bring together survivors. It opened up doors for survivors who would not have necessarily come forward.” (Other professional - interview)*

The successful completion of the Action Plan was also mentioned by a number of the respondents:

*“Action Plan was produced and Scottish Government are committed to implementing this. Most stakeholders bought into the process and take ownership of the Action Plan.” (CELCIS representative - survey)*

Finally, the Interaction was seen as a distinctive contribution to progressing remedies for the survivors of historic abuse in care:

*“It achieved something really unique and distinctive that Scotland should be really proud of. About creating a space where survivors and care providers could build a shared perspective.” (Scottish Government representative - interview)*

*“Achieved an action plan, getting people together, expressing the needs of survivors, putting survivors at the forefront of the process, opening the doors for future engagement.” (Survivor - interview)*



## Conclusion

Participants in the InterAction on the Historic Abuse of Children in Care were largely positive about the process and outcomes of the InterAction. However, there were tensions that arose throughout the process, and these impacted on the way in which some participants were able to engage with the InterAction, and their views on the effectiveness of the process.

There were some clear lessons to be learned from the InterAction. Most important, perhaps, is the need to have realistic expectations about the length of time that such endeavours will take and the level of resources required to support the process and the participants involved. A significant amount of preparation was needed to introduce the model of the InterAction and to enable stakeholders to engage fully with the InterAction process. This had important implications throughout the InterAction and meant that the original level of resources to support the InterAction was seriously underestimated. This also had implications for the organisation of the process and this has been identified in the evaluation.

Over the period of the InterAction, some participants had to withdraw from the process and, in the case of professionals, their places were taken by other representatives of their organisations. Some participants became involved for the first time in the later stages of the InterAction. It is important to ensure that these individuals are fully prepared for their participation and that they have a clear understanding of the principles and methods of working of the process, and what has gone before.

The model of the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care, a facilitated dialogue involving key stakeholders, has shown that a participatory approach based on a human rights framework can produce positive outcomes even when addressing contentious and sensitive issues. It is to be hoped that the learning from this process can inform the development of policy and practice in a wide range of areas.

*“I feel hugely privileged to have been part of the process. And if it just makes one bit of difference the whole thing was worth it.”* (Service provider representative - interview)

*“A very enabling constructive process.”* (Survivor - interview)

*“Overall a very positive and meaningful process.”* (Survivor - interview)

## Learning Points

- To allow for a strong participative process where all voices are heard takes time. As such the time and resources required for preparation for such an endeavour should not be underestimated and must be planned for;
- The research showed a good understanding amongst participants of the aims and objectives of the InterAction process, however, the process would benefit from timely reminders, especially to support those who join part way into the process.
- To be as successful as possible, this type of process takes planning. There should be a continual focus on preparation of participants for engagement with such an endeavour.
- Given the complexity and sensitive nature of many issues that an InterAction may be best placed to support, it is critical to ensure that information and communication is timely and up-to-date to enable participants to meaningfully engage.
- The Review Group for this InterAction was made up of representatives of key stakeholders including survivors of abuse, this made a key contribution to the effective working of the InterAction.
- In order to ensure as wide participation as possible, It is important to use a range of methods to engage with key stakeholders to enable them to take part. Particular attention should be paid to accessibility (including physical access to venues as well as facilitating rural access to the process).
- The establishment of principles and ground rules for behaviour and attitudes is an important method to ensure respect for all is upheld. It is useful to remind participants of these principles throughout the process.
- The views of all stakeholders in an InterAction process should be able to be heard and their voices given equal value. It is important to support participants to be able to do this.

## References

CELCIS/SHRC (2014) *Summary of Responses to the Consultation on the InterAction Action Plan*. Available at:

[http://www.shrcinteraction.org/Portals/23/InterAction\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Summary\\_of\\_Responses.pdf](http://www.shrcinteraction.org/Portals/23/InterAction_Action_Plan_Summary_of_Responses.pdf)

Kendrick, A., Hawthorn, M., Karim, S. & Shaw, J. (2015) Scotland: a human rights approach to historic abuse of children in care. In Skold, J. & Swain, S. (eds.) *In the Midst of Apology: Professionals and the Legacy of Abuse amongst Children in 'Care'*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

SHRC (2010) *A Human Rights Framework for the Design and Implementation of the Proposed "Acknowledgement and Accountability Forum" and Other Remedies for Historic Child Abuse in Scotland*. Available at:

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/application/resources/documents/SHRCHumanRightsFrameworkonAAF.pdf>

SHRC (2012) *Invitation to Tender: Preparation of an InterAction on Historic Child Abuse*. Edinburgh: Scottish Human Rights Commission.

## Appendix 1

### Evaluation of InterAction – Interview Schedule

- i) Aims and objectives of InterAction
  - a. What did you see as aims and objectives of the InterAction?
  - b. Do you think that the InterAction achieved its aims and objectives?
  - c. In what ways did you think it was successful?
  - d. In what ways did you think that it wasn't successful
- ii) Resources and facilities used by InterAction
  - a. What did you think of the preparation you received for the InterAction?
  - b. What did you think of the support for the InterAction?
    - i. Support by CELCIS?
    - ii. Support by SHRC?
    - iii. Support by others?
  - c. What did you think of the venues used by the InterAction?
    - i. Venues for InterAction meetings?
    - ii. Venues for Victim/Survivors open meetings?
    - iii. Venues for other meetings in the InterAction?
- iii) Information and communication?
  - a. What did you think of the information that you received in the InterAction?
  - b. What did you think about the communication for the InterAction?
    - i. InterAction website
    - ii. Emails?
    - iii. Notification of meetings?
- iv) Methods of working
  - a. What did you think of the way that the InterAction worked?
    - i. Review Group?
    - ii. InterAction main meetings?
    - iii. Open events for victims/survivors?
    - iv. Other meetings?
    - v. Consultation on the InterAction Action Plan?
- v) Working relationships
  - a. What did you think about your relationships with other people in the InterAction?
    - i. Other victims/survivors?
    - ii. Other Stakeholders?
    - iii. CELCIS/SHRC?
- vi) In summary, what would you say that the InterAction achieved?
- vii) And what do you think, if failed to achieve?
- viii) In what ways might the InterAction have been more effective?
- ~~ix~~i) Do you have any further comments on the InterAction which haven't been covered?

# Participant Information Sheet for Victims/Survivors of Historic Abuse in Care

**Name of department:** Social Work and Social Policy

**Title of the study:** Evaluation of the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

## Introduction

Our names are Andy Kendrick and Samina Karim and we have been involved with CELCIS in the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care. Andy has been involved in research on children in care for over 25 years and has most recently been working on child protection and historic abuse of children in care. Samina is a qualified social worker and has worked with a wide range of individuals, including child protection and working with Looked After Children. She is currently undertaking a PhD on the role of forgiveness in historic abuse.

## What is the purpose of this investigation?

This research aims to capture the process and outcomes of the SHRC InterAction and the experience of participants in the InterAction. This will help us understand how effective the InterAction has been and to identify factors which facilitated or hindered the process. In the interviews we will ask you about:

- your involvement in the InterAction and what you felt about this;
- what you think worked well about the InterAction and your contribution to the InterAction;
- what you think didn't work so well in the InterAction;
- how effective you thought the InterAction was and what lessons have been learnt.

## Do you have to take part?

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. It will involve taking part in one semi-structured interview (approximately 45 minutes in duration). In the interview, we will gain your thoughts on the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care. With your permission, we will record the interview on a digital recorder.

If at any point during the course of the interview, you want to withdraw, then this is completely fine. Withdrawal, or not wanting to participate, will not affect any other aspects of the way in which you are treated in the context of the investigation or any related service they are involved with. After the interview is complete, an individual debrief will take place with you to check if there are any issues that we may need to follow up.

## What will you do in the project?

As stated above, the study will involve you taking part in one interview session. Interviews will be held either at the University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, St James Road, Glasgow, or at a venue which is convenient for you. If it is not possible to carry out a face-to-face interview, we can do the interview over the telephone or by Skype if this is more convenient to you. The dates of the interviews will be provided once you have provided consent to take part.

## The place of useful learning

The University of Strathclyde is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, number SC015263

### **Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part because you were involved in some way in the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care, and this research aims to gain your perspective on the process, content and outcomes of the InterAction.

### **What are the potential risks to you in taking part?**

The focus of this study will be the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care. Although not the intention of the study, it is possible that thinking through and talking about what happened in the InterAction could lead to upset. This will be worked through as appropriate and we are experienced in providing support when researching sensitive issues. The support of services for victims/survivors are also available to counter any negative impact, and you will be signposted to appropriate services such as In Care Survivors Service Scotland if required.

### **What happens to the information in the project?**

Any information which is published will be anonymous and will refer to participants using pseudonyms or the different types of participants (e.g. victims/survivors). Confidentiality will be explained at the outset of interviews, making explicit that any information shared should not identify names of persons or organisations, except in the event that there are current protection concerns for an individual – in which case the information will be passed on in line with safeguarding procedures. Interviews will be recorded using a digital recorder and this will remain in a secure place within the University building. Similarly, any transcriptions will be made secure and will be encrypted to prevent access.

The report of the research will be published on the InterAction website, and we will inform you when it is published and send the web link. In addition, the results from the research will be published in professional and academic journals.

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implements the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data on participants will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

### **What happens next?**

If you would like to be involved in this study, the attached consent form will need to be signed and returned to confirm this. The signed consent form can be returned by email, by post to the address below, or can be handed to Samina at the start of the interview. If you do not want to be involved with the study, there is nothing more to do, and we thank you sincerely for your attention.

### **Researcher contact details:**

**Name:** Samina Karim

**Email:** [samina.karim@strath.ac.uk](mailto:samina.karim@strath.ac.uk)

**Address:** University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 141 St James Road, Glasgow, G4 0LT

**Telephone:** 0141 552 4400



**Chief Investigator details:**

**Name: Professor Andrew Kendrick**

**Email: [Andrew.kendrick@strath.ac.uk](mailto:Andrew.kendrick@strath.ac.uk)**

**Address: University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 141 St James Road, Glasgow, G4 0LT**

**Telephone: 0141 552 4400**

This investigation was granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the investigation, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee

Research & Knowledge Exchange Services

University of Strathclyde

Graham Hills Building

50 George Street

Glasgow

G1 1QE

Telephone: 0141 548 3707

Email: [ethics@strath.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@strath.ac.uk)

## Consent Form for Victims/Survivors of Historic Abuse

**Name of department:** Social Work and Social Policy

**Title of the study:** Evaluation of the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.
- I understand that I can withdraw my data from the study at any time
- I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential in the event that there are current protection concerns for an individual.
- I understand that no information that identifies me will be made publicly available
- I consent to being a participant in the project
- I consent to being audio recorded as part of the project
- I understand that any recordings will be destroyed after the completion of the study

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

# **Participant Information Sheet**

## **Evaluation of SHRC InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care**

**Name of department:** Social Work and Social Policy

**Title of the study:** Evaluation of the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

### **Introduction**

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### **What is the purpose of this investigation?**

This research aims to capture the process and outcomes of the SHRC InterAction and the experience of participants in the InterAction. This will help us understand how effective the InterAction has been and to identify factors which facilitated or hindered the process. The research will:

- (1) Detail the stages in the InterAction process and the role of the various participants in different aspects of the InterAction,
- (2) Capture the experiences of the different participants: Participants in the full InterAction meetings; Review Group members; Participants in the broader range of InterAction meetings,
- (3) Identify those features which facilitated the process and those which hindered it, and how effective the InterAction has been,
- (4) Develop recommendations for policy and practice on the model of the InterAction.

### **Do you have to take part?**

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and will either involve completing an online questionnaire or taking part in a semi-structured interview (approximately 30 - 45 minutes in duration). In the questionnaire/interview, we will gain your thoughts on the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care.

If at any point during the course of the interview, you want to withdraw, then this is completely fine. Withdrawal or not wanting to participate will not affect any other aspects of the way in which you are treated within any context. After the interview is complete, an individual debrief will take place with you to check if there are any issues that we may need to follow up.

### **What will you do in the project?**

As stated above, the study will either involve completing an online questionnaire or taking part in one interview session. Interviews will be held either at the University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, St James Road, Glasgow, or at a venue which is

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convenient for you. If it is not possible to carry out a face-to-face interview, we can do the interview over the telephone or by Skype if this is more convenient to you. The date of the interview will be arranged once you have provided consent to take part.

**Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part because you were involved in some way in the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care, and this research aims to gain your thoughts on the process, content and outcomes of the InterAction.

**What are the potential risks to you in taking part?**

The focus of this study will be the InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care. Although not the intention of the study, it is possible that thinking through and talking about what happened in the InterAction could lead to upset. This will be worked through as appropriate and we are experienced in providing support when researching sensitive issues.

**What happens to the information in the project?**

The information that we collect from you through the questionnaire or the interview will not contain any personal information when it is reported in the final study. Any quotes from the questionnaire or interview will not be attributed you but by type of stakeholder (e.g. residential care provider).

Interviews will be recorded using a digital recorder and this will remain in a secure place within the University building. Similarly, any transcriptions will be made secure and will be encrypted to prevent access.

The report of the research will be published on the InterAction website, and we will inform you when it is published and send the web link.

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implements the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data on participants will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

**What happens next?**

If you would like to be involved in this study, the attached consent form will need to be signed and returned to confirm this. If you do not want to be involved with the study, could you let us know, and there is nothing more to do, and we thank you for your attention.

**Researcher contact details:**

**Name:** Samina Karim

**Email:** [samina.karim@strath.ac.uk](mailto:samina.karim@strath.ac.uk)

**Address:** University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 141 St James Road, Glasgow, G4 0LT

**Telephone:** 0141 552 4400

**Chief Investigator details:**

**Name: Professor Andrew Kendrick**

**Email: [Andrew.kendrick@strath.ac.uk](mailto:Andrew.kendrick@strath.ac.uk)**

**Address: University of Strathclyde, Lord Hope Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 141 St James Road, Glasgow, G4 0LT**

**Telephone: 0141 552 4400**

This investigation was granted ethical approval by the School of Social Work and Social Policy Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the investigation, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Iain MacLeod

Convenor

School of Social Work and Social Policy Ethics Committee

Lord Hope Building

141 St James Road

Glasgow

G4 0LT

Telephone: 0141 444 8648

Email: [iain.mcleod@strath.ac.uk](mailto:iain.mcleod@strath.ac.uk)

# Consent Form for Participants

## Evaluation of SHRC InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

**Name of department:** Social Work and Social Policy

**Title of the study:** Evaluation of the SHRC InterAction on Historic Abuse of Children in Care

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.
- I understand that I can withdraw my data from the study at any time
- I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential except in situations of concern.
- I understand that no information that identifies me will be made publicly available
- I consent to being a participant in the project
- I consent to being audio recorded as part of the project
- I understand that any recordings will be destroyed after the completion of the study

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

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- <sup>i</sup> <http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/about/strategicplan/strategicplan20082012>
- <sup>ii</sup> <http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/about/strategicplan/strategicplan20082012>