

For more information on the specific needs of Deafblind people, contact Deafblind Scotland on 0141 777 6111.

For more information on the specific needs of deaf people with complex needs, contact Hayfield Support Services with Deaf People on 0141 429 0335 or Sense Scotland on 0141 429 0294.

## Consultation Questionnaire

### Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the purpose of a National Confidential Forum?

Agree  Disagree  No preference

Will the Forum provide an opportunity for adults who were at special schools as boarders to give their accounts too? For example, deaf children who went to deaf schools as boarders.

And will the Forum be fully accessible for anyone who has a communication/language support need?

### Q2. Do you agree or disagree that the Forum should operate independently from Government?

Agree  Disagree  No preference

If there is to be a Forum, then it should be funded by the government but operated independently.

### Q3. Should the Forum (a) be integrated into another public body ?

Agree  Disagree  No preference

### (b) be a separate unit within another public body?

Agree  Disagree  No preference

A possible public body would be the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland as this commission already has a safeguarding role.

**Q4. Do you agree or disagree that all adults who were placed in residential care by the State should be eligible to take part in the National Confidential Forum?**

Agree  Disagree  No preference

If there is to be a National Confidential Forum, it should be open to all adults who were in residential care as children, whether placed by the State or not. It should also be open to any adult who has come to Scotland from the Commonwealth and who was in residential care provided by the UK Government or supported by the UK Government. It is known that children who were “forced” to migrate and who were cared for in residential care were, in some cases, abused and subject to cruel and degrading treatment. This may also be the case for people coming into Scotland from Commonwealth countries.

**Q5. Do you agree or disagree that the process should be the same for all participants, regardless of whether they regard themselves as survivors of abuse in residential childcare?**

Agree  Disagree  No preference

If an adult was in residential care and abused, then they should have the opportunity to be listened to, regardless of whether or not they self identify as a survivor. “Survivors of abuse” is a term that not everyone will be happy to identify with.

**Q6. Do you agree or disagree that people who were in the following types of residential care should be included:**

- residential schools and children’s homes
- residential educational provision for children with special needs
- long-stay hospital provision for children with acute medical and/or mental health needs
- secure accommodation

Agree  Disagree  No preference

All institutions that provided residential care for children must be included to ensure all adults who want to take part have the opportunity, to ensure equality of access to support for all adults who experienced childhood abuse, if they want to the opportunity.

For example, SCoD has produced a number of DVDs recording the experiences of Deaf BSL users throughout their lives. Several of the people who took part told of

the abuse they suffered while boarders at Deaf schools. It is important that Deaf BSL users who were often sent away to Deaf boarding schools have the same opportunity as adults who were placed in residential units/organisations by the State, and adults who as children were sent away to residential units/organisations/institutes by their families also have equality of opportunity to tell their stories and receive support.

It is the opportunity to be heard and be believed that is important and part of the “healing process” so if the government is to set up such a Forum, it is important it is open to all adults that want the opportunity to tell.

**Q7. What other support do you consider that participants would benefit from before, during and after the Forum?**

The support offered should be appropriate to the person who is doing the telling. For example, it might be that a Deaf BSL user will need access to accessible counselling before and after the event.

If the “telling” results in legal proceedings, then deaf people must have equality of access of support as their hearing peers before, during and after these proceedings taking place. The support must be accessible to the deaf person(s).

**Q8. Do you think that the participants should be protected from legal action in connection with their work for the Forum?**

Yes  No  No preference

**Q9. Do you think there are any barriers that would prevent people who are eligible to take part in the Forum from participating?**

Yes  No

Unless the Forum is fully accessible to people who have communication/language support needs then people who are eligible will be unable to take part. This means that all information must be fully accessible as well as attending the Forum. Those running the Forum and listening must be fully deaf aware so that the needs of all deaf people who want the chance to take part are respected.

Information must include what will happen with their stories and what legal proceedings could take place if necessary.

**Q10. Do you wish to add any additional points about the Forum?**

Yes  No

Comments

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

### **Introduction**

The public sector duties require the Scottish Government pay “due regard” to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic.

These three requirements apply across the “protected characteristics” of age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

In effect, this means that equality considerations are integrated into all the functions and policies of Scottish Government Directorates and Agencies.

A key part of those duties is to impact assess all our policies to ensure that we do not inadvertently create a negative impact for equality groups and also that we actively seek the opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

### **The Aim of the National Confidential Forum**

The aim of the National Confidential Forum is to give adults who spent time in residential care as children the opportunity to talk about their experiences.

In this section of the consultation questions we are particularly interested in finding out your views on whether the National Confidential Forum meets the needs of the following groups:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Race
- Religion and Belief

Your responses to the questions will help us to carry out a full equality impact assessment for a National Confidential Forum.

## Questions

1. Do you think the creation of a National Confidential Forum will have a disproportionately negatively impact on particular groups of people in our target audience?

Yes  No

It could have – if, for example, residential/boarded schools are excluded. Deaf BSL users should have the opportunity to tell their stories and be listened to and respected in the same way as those adults who were placed in residential care by the State. There is evidence that deaf children who were boarders at deaf schools were subject to abuse and cruel and degrading treatment – court case in 2008/09, for example.

2. Do you think the creation of a National Confidential Forum will have a positive impact on particular groups of people in our target audience?

Yes  No

If all the residential care establishments are included then yes, there will be a positive impact on adults who want the opportunity to tell their stories.

3. What negative impacts do you think the National Confidential Forum will have on a particular group?

If the National Confidential Forum is not accessible, then it will have a negative impact on all adults with communication/language support needs.

The publicising of a National Forum could have a negative impact on people who have been abused by individuals rather than in a residential care setting; or by those who are in an abusive situation at the present time. It could also have a negative impact on asylum seekers and refugees who have been abused but have not had any support.

4. What positive impacts do you think the National Confidential Forum will have on a particular group?

5. What changes would you suggest to reduce any negative impact you have identified?

Comments

6. What changes would you suggest to enhance any positive impacts you have identified?

Comments

7. Are there any significant issues we need to consider in relation to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Race

- Religion and Belief?

Accessibility for people who have a communication/language support need, in terms of information, the telling of their stories, and after the telling.