

MEDIA RELEASE

TJHC addresses leading Catholic health provider



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Catholic health and welfare organisations need to be increasingly aware and prepared for the fall-out from the child abuse Royal Commission the CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, Mr Francis Sullivan, has told a group of senior health administrators and religious leaders.

Speaking at the joint formation session for the Calvary Ministries and Little Company of Mary Health Care Mr Sullivan said it is important that Catholic organisations which have not been the focus of the Royal Commission fully understand the implications for them.

'The Catholic leadership, which is largely seen by the Catholic and broader community, as having failed to address the abuse crisis in the Church doesn't stop at the door of the Bishops and Congregational leadership,' Mr Sullivan said.

'The leadership of all our Catholic institutions have a role to play in rebuilding the credibility of the Church.

'As the child sex abuse crisis in the Church reached its worst in the 1970s and 80s the responsibility for dealing with it rested for the most part with the bishops and religious leaders at the time.

"More than a quarter of a century on, the responsibility is now collective and we all have a role to play in ensuring all children in all parts of our church are safe.

'Many religious orders and dioceses now have in place safe guarding officers and other professionals. This helps ensure a focus, and commitment to best practice in these organisations for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

'It could also include staff and others being given the opportunity to understand how administrators are responding to the revelations coming from the Royal Commission and staff also being made aware of the reforms Church leadership are putting in place to better respond to abuse survivors.

'The people working in Catholic health, education and welfare organisations are often on the front line when dealing with members of the community who are angry with the church's response to the abuse crisis.

'They need to understand the changes that are in place and the changes that are underway,' he said.

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