

MEDIA RELEASE

Commonwealth announces funding for child sexual abuse redress scheme



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An initial \$33.4 million in this year's budget to kick-start the setting up of a national redress scheme for survivors of child sexual abuse has been welcomed by the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council.

Francis Sullivan, Council CEO, said the funding is a good start and that the Catholic Church fully supports, and will be part of the new scheme.

"What we now need to see is all state governments and all other institutions where child sexual abuse took place become part of the scheme. The scheme will not work unless the state governments step up," he said.

"It is now time for the state premiers and the chief ministers to demonstrate that they can lead beyond politics and they can respond to the genuine need of victims.

"The main game is that no matter where you were abused in Australia and no matter what institutions, everybody has to participate in the scheme so that victims get a chance to get redress."

"This is the best option available for survivors of child sexual abuse to receive justice and compensation," he said.

Last night's federal budget commits an initial \$33.4 million in 2017/18 to meet the redress scheme's establishment costs and provide ongoing access to support services for survivors.

Funding beyond that has not been revealed, with the budget papers citing legal sensitivities.

The scheme will begin taking applications for redress from survivors of abuse in Commonwealth institutions from July next year.

The national scheme relies on the Commonwealth, states, territories, churches and charities agreeing to opt into it and to fund redress payments for survivors who were abused in the institutions they operated.

Media contact: Michael Salmon 0417 495 018

The Truth Justice and Healing Council is coordinating the Catholic Church's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.