

Monday, 04 June 2018

## UCA opts in on redress

The President of the Uniting Church in Australia Stuart McMillan has today announced that the Uniting Church will opt in to the Federal Government's National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

"We acknowledge the impact of child sexual abuse in the lives of those who have been abused in our institutions or those of our predecessor Churches. To each survivor and all of their families, I am truly sorry," said Mr McMillan.

"It is our sincere hope that this National Redress Scheme will allow survivors of institutional child sexual abuse to access support to help them in their lives," said Mr McMillan.

All seven Uniting Church Standing Committees have resolved to opt in to the National Scheme. The WA Synod's entry is conditional on the WA Government also opting in, something which is expected to occur within weeks.

The Uniting Church is working to establish a single legal entity to engage with the National Scheme.

"There is more work to do, and we are acting in good faith, staying true to the Church's public commitments to survivors," said Mr McMillan.

"Our motivation in joining the National Redress Scheme is so that more survivors across all institutions might have equitable and consistent levels of support.

"I want to specifically acknowledge the pain and the courage of survivors who retell and relive their experience whenever there are changes to redress schemes or public discussion on child sexual abuse.

"I emphasise the public pledge I made to the Royal Commission in 2017 – that the Uniting Church will apply the lessons of the Royal Commission, and remain open to the insights of survivors and professionals.

"We will keep listening to survivors, and we will work constructively with the Federal Government and other Scheme members to try to make sure this Scheme works for survivors."

Discussing these issues can raise difficult emotions and past memories for some people. If you or someone you know needs help, please call:

1800 RESPECT on 1 800 737 732

Lifeline on 13 11 14

Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800

MensLine Australia on 1300 789 978

Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467

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