



# Abuse in Care

## Royal Commission of Inquiry



### Message from Abuse in Care Inquiry Chair, Sir Anand Satyanand

Kia ora koutou,

As advised earlier this month I have indicated a wish to step down from

being Chair of the Commission at the end of its build-up period. I will chair the Contextual hearing starting on 29 October, assist in briefing the new Chair appointed by the Government in November, and remain on the sidelines as a supporter of the Commission's work following that.

The Abuse in Care Inquiry is a once in a lifetime opportunity to change how New Zealand cares for its children, young people and vulnerable adults. We need each and every one of you reading this today to tell others about this Inquiry, to help anyone who may have suffered abuse in State care or at any faith-based institution to share their experiences with us.

Although sharing experiences of abuse will not rewrite history, hopefully, through our survivor informed recommendations, we as a country can transform how we care for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Everything the Inquiry does is aimed at ensuring a process of healing will be initiated for many survivors, and real change will be made for the children of future generations.

I know I will leave the Inquiry in very capable hands.

Kia kaha

Sir Anand Satyanand  
**Commission Chair**



## Procedures for Contextual hearing explained

The first Procedural hearing was held in Auckland on Monday, 19 August. The purpose of this event was to prepare for the first public hearing (Contextual hearing) beginning on 29 October in Auckland.

A number of agencies and lawyers representing survivors spoke at the Procedural hearing, including the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia; the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand; The Salvation Army; the Crown and survivor advocates Annette Sykes and Sonja Cooper.

Sir Anand Satyanand, who chaired the hearing, said the Royal Commission of Inquiry had put a lot of thought into designing processes that would be open, engaging and accessible for people, either with or without their lawyers.

He outlined the procedures for public hearings. Tikanga Māori will be observed during all public hearings. The hearings will be very different from court hearings and be held in the Inquiry's building in Auckland as well as Marae, community centres and other venues where people feel more comfortable. All public hearings will be live streamed to the Inquiry's website and have a New Zealand Sign Language Interpreter. Wellbeing staff will be available at the hearings.



## Introducing Pasefika Engagement Advisors Fonoti Pati Umaga and Tofa Fagaloa

Talofa lava, Bula Vinaka, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Taloha ni, Tālofa

Pasefika Engagement Advisors Fonoti Pati Umaga and Tofa Fagaloa will assist the Inquiry to engage with Pasefika peoples and organisations from a variety of backgrounds, including LGBTQI+ and

fa'afafine. Faith-based care will also be a focus.

The team will be seeking opinions and ideas on the best ways to engage with communities, being mindful of the diversity within Pasefika nations and their cultural nuances.

The advisors have already met with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Tū Ora (Compass Health), Health Pasifika, The Family Centre, Citizen's Advice Bureau and Youthlaw Aotearoa.

Following talanoa (discussion) with Commissioner Ali'imua Sandra Alofivae, the team is developing a Pasefika strategy to ensure that Inquiry processes are culturally safe for survivors, witnesses, families and the community, not only before and during their journey with the Inquiry, but, just as importantly, afterwards. There has also been talanoa around different options for survivors to present their stories, for example through a collective voice. To get in touch with our Pasefika Engagement Advisors call us on 0800 222 727 or email us at [contact@abuse.org.nz](mailto:contact@abuse.org.nz)



## Inquiry welcomes confidentiality waiver

Survivors who wish to participate in the Inquiry into Abuse in Care will now be able to share details of any confidential

settlements made with them by the Crown.

The Government announced this month that it would waive confidentiality clauses in any settlements it has made with survivors of abuse in State care through its agencies.

This means survivors can share their settlement details with the Inquiry if they wish.

Agencies that have reached settlements with historic abuse survivors include the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, Child Youth and Family and their predecessors.

This decision only applies to Crown agencies – it does not cover confidentiality obligations that are part of settlement agreements with other parties, such as private care providers, school boards of trustees or district health boards. In addition, the Crown cannot waive any confidentiality requirements that are ordered by a Court.

The Salvation Army has advised that they will also waive confidentiality clauses made in settlements they were part of. We expect other faith-based institutions and other organisations, such as boards of trustees, DHBs and private care providers for example, to do the same.

It is entirely up to survivors whether to disclose information from a confidential settlement. The Inquiry will respect survivors' privacy at all times.



## New website for the Inquiry

The Royal Commission has a new website. The website has been developed to make it easier for survivors to get information about the Inquiry and follow its progress. It is more accessible and easier to read on mobile devices.

There is information for survivors about attending private sessions - what to expect and what to do – as well as what counselling and support is available. You can also

find out about our public hearings and keep up with the latest news. Key documents like our Terms of Reference are also on the site.

Executive Director Mervin Singham says the website has been developed with survivors in mind.

"We want to make it as easy as possible for survivors to engage with us. Having a website that provides information that our survivor communities need to enable them to engage with us, and making that information accessible, is vital," he said.

Visit our website at [www.abuseincare.org.nz](http://www.abuseincare.org.nz)

## Royal Commission seeks Ambassadors

The Royal Commission is looking for ambassadors to join the Inquiry. Ambassadors will provide a vital link between the Inquiry and key survivor communities including Māori, Pasefika, gangs, and people with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities.

Ambassadors will talk about the work of the Inquiry with their networks and connections and encourage survivors to be part of the Inquiry. They will also provide information and advice to the Royal Commission on what survivor communities want to know, or need to take part in.

The Inquiry will engage six to 10 Ambassadors across New Zealand during the Inquiry.

If you think you could help us with this important task, please email us at [recruitment@abuseincare.org.nz](mailto:recruitment@abuseincare.org.nz) telling us why you are interested. Please address your application to the Ambassador Coordinator, with the subject line 'Interest in Ambassador role'. If you know of someone who might be interested, please tell them to contact us.

