

June 30, 2014

New Head and Members appointed to National Confidential Forum

The Minister for Public Health today announced the appointment of the first Head and three Members to the National Confidential Forum.

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 as amended by the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 establishes the National Confidential Forum as a committee of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (MWC). The Head of the Forum is accountable to the Chair of the MWC. The Forum will carry out its functions separately from the other functions of the Commission and will endeavour to retain operational independence from the Commission so far as reasonably practicable. The National Confidential Forum (Forum) is part of the overall Strategy for Survivors of Childhood Abuse, sponsored by Survivor Scotland <http://www.survivorscotland.org.uk/confidential-forum/>.

The Forum will give people who were placed in a residential care or health service as children the opportunity to share their experiences through a confidential, supportive and non-judgmental process. The Forum aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people placed in institutional care as children, by offering acknowledgement of their experiences, including experiences of abuse and neglect. The Forum will seek to prevent harm to children and young people currently in care by learning lessons from the past. It will also enhance public knowledge and understanding of an important part of Scotland's history by recording the experiences of those who were in institutional care as children. Participants will be signposted to other appropriate services— before, during, and after hearings.

The new Forum Head is:

Ms Anne Currie - studied Law at Glasgow University and following a career break to have two daughters, she joined the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal (COPFS) from 1987-2013. As a career prosecutor, Anne has prepared and prosecuted cases covering all types of crime, including two years as a specialist in Glasgow Child Abuse Unit. As a senior Procurator Fiscal Anne led many teams during changes in COPFS particularly responding to the needs of Scotland's communities and the role of the Fiscal in both the Safer Stronger Agenda and the Victims and Witnesses agenda. She was District Fiscal Kilmarnock, then District PF for Glasgow South and City Centre, leading the Equality and Diversity for COPFS Glasgow and chairing Glasgow MARIM Group (Multi-Agency Racial Incident Monitoring). She was also COPFS lead on the Archway (sexual assault referral centre) pilot. Anne was also Area PF Grampian based in Aberdeen from 2008 until 2012 and laterally was Head of Sheriff and Jury West Federation. Anne does not hold any other ministerial appointments.

The new Members are:

Dr Elizabeth Calder graduated in Medicine at Edinburgh University and trained as both General Practitioner and later, as Psychiatrist, working in Scotland and Australia. Worked as clinical researcher with NHS Ayrshire and Arran on alternatives to long-term hospital care, and developed a special interest in, and understanding of, issues related to institutional care from this work. Elizabeth has also worked as Medical Officer with Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland for 14 years and brings to the board experience in the field of ethics and law in mental health; and in physical health care for people with mental illness or impaired decision-making ability, and in the care and welfare of children and adolescents with mental illness and those being looked after and accommodated. She is also experienced in safeguarding the rights of people who are vulnerable, and in providing accessible advice to individuals about their rights, and how to access and navigate services; in promoting best practice through teaching and writing guidance for publication; and in carrying out investigations into care and potential deficiencies in care; and in writing incisive and influential reports. As lead and coordinator for specific teams and projects Elizabeth also brings skills in task management and collaborative multi-disciplinary work. Elizabeth does not hold any other ministerial appointments.

Ms Stella Everingham is a professionally qualified social worker. She has worked within children's services in England and Scotland for over thirty years. Having worked in local authorities, central government and the voluntary sector she has worked closely with looked after children young people and their families. She is very familiar with residential and foster care settings and understands the impact that harsh or abusive care can have on individuals. Stella is a Member of the Big Lottery Committee Scotland.

Professor Kay Hampton (FRSA, FHEA) was a full-time academic until January 2011 and holds a personal Chair in Communities and Race Relations with a PhD in Sociology. She is one of 4 commissioners who was tasked with setting up the Scottish Human Rights Commission and is serving her second term in office. She is also a lay member of the Scottish Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. Previous positions include, Chair, Commission for Racial Equality; Commissioner, Equality and Human Rights Commission; Trustee, SAMH, Tutor and Panel Member, Children's Hearings, Scotland. In addition to academically related skills, Kay has extensive experience in the field of equality, diversity and human rights with an in-depth knowledge and understanding of social justice, fairness and equality.

The appointments will be for three years. The Head appointment will run from June 30, 2014 to June 29, 2017. The Member appointments will run from August 1, 2014 to July 31, 2017.

The Head appointment attracts a remuneration of £335 per day and the Member appointments attract a remuneration of £235 for a time commitment of four days per week.

Anne Currie, Elizabeth Calder and Stella Everingham do not hold any other ministerial appointments.

Kay Hampton is a Commissioner on the Scottish Human Rights Commission for which she receives £253.75 per day for a time commitment of two and a half days per month. Kay is also a Lay Member on the Scottish Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal for which she receives £257 per sitting for a time commitment of four to six times a year.

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public. None of the new appointees have had any political activity in the last five years.