

Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Mental Health
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to record that during my childhood, I spent time in care. I was one of the thousands of children that were placed into institutions and/or foster homes that were operated by a number of the churches, charities and by state governments. Specifically I spent time in:

Many of the children like me had a terrible experience of institutional life - being subjected to extreme cruelty, deprivation, neglect and abuse.

I want the Senators to know that many Care leavers have suffered from mental illness for years. We suffer from chronic anxiety; chronic depression; phobias and as well, a large number of us have Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. **Our mental illnesses have remained untreated for years because no specific treatment programs have been set up to respond to the mental health of Care leavers.**

Senators will know that much of the information about our experiences and our circumstance as adults is in the senate report "Forgotten Australians" which contains a set of excellent recommendations. They may not know that the majority of organisations that are responsible for the untreated mental illness that we now suffer, have chosen not to respond to our needs and choose not to set up services responsive to our identified and documented needs.

I am appealing to the members of the Committee to look into this situation.

Signature:

Name (print):

Address (print):

Date: