



CHILDREN'S COMMISSION
OF QUEENSLAND

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Neerkol Saga Takes New Turn

At a meeting in Brisbane today, the continuing saga of alleged abuse of former residents of an orphanage at Neerkol near Rockhampton took a new turn. The meeting was attended by a representative committee of the former residents and the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy.

The meeting was held at the Children's Commission under the chairmanship of an independent mediator agreed by the participants. Children's Commissioner, Norman Alford who attended the meeting as an observer, said that he was impressed by the immense goodwill shown by all participants. "I think all participants at the meeting are greatly relieved to know that they have now arrived at the start of a meaningful healing process in this unfortunate episode", the Commissioner said.

The Sisters of Mercy have agreed to provide financial help to provide counselling support for those former residents who will be involved in imminent court appearances arising from residents' allegations.

The Victims of Crime Association has agreed to provide the counselling support for the former residents in regard to their Court appearances.

Further meetings between the former residents and the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy are still to be held.

**For further information, contact the Children's Commissioner, Norman Alford
07 3247 5525 or 0412 246 502.**