

Evidentiary interviews.txt

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 Subject: Evidentiary interviews
 Date: Thursday, 9 May 2002 2:19 pm

Dear CEIS team,

The staff at IDSC who would be involved in assisting you with interviews of people with an intellectual disability who may be able to provide some evidence to assist your investigations into the St Ann's Special School matter have recently met with Karen Fitzgerald from Child Protection Services at Flinders MC. The consensus view at the end of our meeting was that we should work cooperatively on these interviews rather than IDSC staff attempt to conduct them without the expertise available through CPS.

Our suggestion is as follows;

1. When you meet with a person with an intellectual disability with whom you would like to conduct an interview but with whom you believe you will need assistance, contact me (as before).
2. I will arrange for IDSC staff from the SISS team to conduct assessments as required to ascertain the level of intellectual functioning and degree and type of communication assistance the person may need.
3. I will liaise with Karen Fitzgerald for she or her staff to conduct the interview with whatever support is required as determined in the assessment in 2.
4. You, I and Karen/CPS staff member will liaise to arrange and conduct the interview.

Our reasons for engaging CPS in this process are as follows; IDSC's area of work is in assessment, support and provision of services to people with an intellectual disability while CPS's area of expertise is in responding to abuse situations.

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As such it was felt that -

1. in the event that one of these matters goes to court either in relation to a conviction or compensation, IDSC would be a less credible "witness" in presenting interview evidence of this type while we would remain a highly credible witness in presenting information about the capacity of the person with intellectual disability and the means used to support and assist them
2. given the history of people with an intellectual disability as victims of crime and their success rate in matters against them being successfully prosecuted it was felt that we would be doing both our clients and your efforts a disservice by not attempting to secure the best available expertise in compiling interview evidence.

In short, the only real change to proceedings is that we have asked Karen and her staff at CPS to assist us by actually conducting the interviews with our assistance.

Please let me know if this change creates any problems for your work.

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