

File Nos. A5377 & A5773.

HON. MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE

NEW SERVICES FOR CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE  
INCORPORATED IN CHILDREN'S PROTECTION SERVICE

RECEIVED

10 MAR 1981

MINISTERS OFFICE

Advising you further of progress in the establishment of the above new services, I am pleased to be able to report that staff for all three new positions have been selected in anticipation of the commencement of the services in late March 1981 as projected.

The Departmental Working Party set up to oversee the establishment of the service has continued its work. A survey of all child sexual abuse cases referred to the Department's metropolitan offices and institutions during the next three months will begin in March. The Working Party is also giving consideration to the roles of the new officers, and to their eventual contribution to in-service training. The officers will also provide a direct service to selected cases.

Suitable premises could not be located in the South Perth area as originally planned. However Kensington Annexe, a former small hospital in Hensman Road, Subiaco owned by the Public Works Department, is ideally suited for the purpose. I have signified to the Public Service Board, my wish to secure these premises for the Children's Protection Service and this matter is now being actively pursued. Application has been made to the Subiaco City Council for permission to utilise the premises as a Counselling Centre under the present zoning. The Council has deferred its approval until their next meeting in March. Public Works Department are continuing with preparation of plans for alterations and cost estimates. In the absence of Council approval, they will require authorisation to proceed. If there is any delay in acquiring the premises, the new services will be accommodated temporarily at Bridgewater.

Since March 1981 has been announced as the commencing date, a number of agencies hold expectations that a skilled service will immediately be available on that date. There is also likely to be considerable media interest at this time.

My advice to those agencies will be that there must be an interim period of several months, during which the new specialist officers will be developing knowledge, skills and experience with sexual abuse problems and developing new treatment approaches within an acceptable framework of protection for the child. At the same time they will be developing methods and techniques for the many parties involved to work effectively together in the interests of sexually abused children and their families. These parties include psychiatrists, psychologists, hospital and medical services, school staff and law enforcement officers.

In anticipating public interest in the new services, you may wish to prepare some information for the Press to coincide with the informative letter that I shall be sending in March to the agencies concerned.

*noted*  
*12/3*  
*9*  
*L. Hamory*  
DIRECTOR

*noted. good news generally.*

*Copy to J. M. Per.*

*11/3. Sent 12/3.*

6 March 1981.

Prepared by J. Hamory.