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Bill Appleby
CEO
Jewish Care Victoria

9 April 2014

Support and Advocacy Service for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse

The recent conviction of three perpetrators of child sexual abuse that occurred within Jewish schools and sporting groups clearly demonstrates that child sexual abuse has been, and may continue to be, a deep-seated problem in certain organisations within the Jewish community. The suffering victims endure is significant and the effects long lasting. Jewish victims who seek help within the community deserve to have available to them community-based counselling, advocacy and other support services.

In order to ensure that these services are provided with the highest levels of transparency and accountability, the service-provider should ideally be an organisation that operates within the established framework of governance of the Jewish community under the umbrella of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV), at the State level in Victoria, and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) at the Federal level.

To this end, the ECAJ and JCCV have formed the view that the only organisation that meets these criteria in Victoria is Jewish Care Victoria (JCV). We believe JCV is best place to provide the necessary services to the community because:

- It is the largest service provider to the Jewish community in Victoria and can accommodate the provision of these services within its infrastructure;
- Providing support and advocacy fits within the ethos, philosophy and values of the JCV;
- It operates with professional standards of corporate governance and accountability and is ultimately answerable to community, ensuring professional conduct is maintained in its assistance to and advocacy for victims;
- Its own proactive response to historical allegations were widely applauded in the community, fostering communal confidence in its ability to understand and respond to the needs of victims of child sexual abuse;

It is proposed that JCV be the provider of the required services but not the driver of its establishment. The ECAJ and JCCV, as the representative roof bodies of the Victorian and Australian Jewish communities, will call for the establishment of this service and will ask JCV to

facilitate it. It is hoped that the JCV model would then inspire similar such models in Jewish communities in other states.

The ECAJ and JCCV also intend to approach the Federal Government to seek funding for this proposal. It is believed that government funding would greatly assist JCV in providing this service, and would as such benefit the Jewish community as a whole.

It is further believed that individual donors within the Jewish community may well add their support if the service provider is the JCV, given JCV's well-regarded track record and support of the community leadership.

Finally, it is acknowledged that the announcement of this proposal might possibly generate protest from private persons or groups outside the community governance structure who provide, or wish to provide, similar services. However, we believe that most people will readily understand that the communal interest is best served by having JCV as the provider of the required services for the reasons outlined.

Yours sincerely,



David Marlow
Executive Director
Jewish Community Council of Victoria

Dear Bill

The ECAJ confirms its support for this approach.



Peter Wertheim AM
Executive Director