



2nd June 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

As you know, the Second Interim Report of the Commission on Mother and Baby Homes was published recently. Having reflected on it carefully, I would like to invite survivors and former residents, including their representative groups, to an initial meeting in Dublin City Centre on Friday the 30th June.

The initial meeting will be followed by a series of facilitated discussions in June/July, aimed at understanding your views on the report and, specifically, to explore if there are particular supports in the areas of health and well-being that could be of value to those who lived for a time in a Mother and Baby Home or County Home as a child without their mother.

I have asked an experienced facilitator, Mr. Jim Halley, to help us with this and future meetings, so that we can get the best value from the discussions and to make sure that everyone's voice is heard. Jim is a past Chairman of the Chartered Institute of Arbitration and he is an internationally respected mediator and facilitator. The meetings will be held in private and will fully respect the right to confidentiality of all concerned. I attach a copy of the terms of reference that I have given to Jim.

I want to ensure that this initiative does not pre-empt or undermine the work of the Commission, which is due to report in February next. I have in mind a process that will help us identify possible supports for unaccompanied residents, without prejudice to what the final conclusions or recommendations of the Commission might be.

In order that we can plan properly for the meeting, we are now inviting expressions of interest in attending. I'd be grateful if you could complete the attached short form for this purpose. After the first meeting I am very open to arranging a number of discussions led by the facilitator in venues outside Dublin if there are sufficient numbers for this, so the form asks you to indicate a preferred location from a list of possible future venues.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With warm regards,

Dr. Katherine Zappone T.D.
Minister for Children and Youth Affairs