




redress
SUPPORT SERVICE

Summary of activity
January to March 2024

Q4 marks the end of the second full financial year the Redress Support Service has been supporting people to access Scotland's Redress Scheme. We found that accessing Redress Support Service can help people to grow understanding and provide practical help to complete tasks needed to move forward in the process.

People supported by the service shared how the compassion and understanding of Link Workers created spaces where they could express and explore how they were feeling. A few people shared how support had led greater self-understanding, or helped to find safe ways to release feelings and find emotional stability.

Our helpline is accessed by people at different points of their redress journey allows time and space to express feelings and give reassurance and support.



"I'm grateful to [my Link Worker] for her support. If it wasn't for her, I probably wouldn't have gone through with this. I find she was easy to talk to and made me feel at ease. I've never spoken to anyone about what happened to me in over 50 years. I'm now glad it's all out now and I thank her very much.'

-feedback shared about the Link Worker team

The Redress Support Service is there for someone throughout their redress journey, and we are aware that each person's path is different.

For example, people shared how their journey of redress is happening alongside other life circumstances, such as bereavements, health issues, and homelessness.

For some people, the flexibility of support was important so that it could pause and re-start around their life experiences, for example pausing support when a family member became unwell. Being able to have flexibility in support enabled people to apply at a time that was right for them, knowing they could re-start their support when they needed to.

People also share the areas of strength they have in their lives. These are highlighted in conversations with Link Workers, who encourage people supported by the service to make plans about how they can draw on their own areas of strength during redress and explore how support from Redress Support Service can complement this.



187

187 people referred to the Redress Support Service - 184 referred for support to apply and 4 for support with non-financial redress



1730

1730 people referred to the service to date

We see how Link Workers continue to model a trauma informed approach to support, prioritising the core principles of safety, trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment.

Feedback from people we support continued to emphasise how they valued the empathy, compassion and kindness of Link Workers. People shared how this helped them to feel comfortable and 'at ease' in talking to Link Workers, who they felt took the time to listen, were 'respectful' and 'understanding'.

People also shared how they found support was reliable and Link Workers were responsive in their contact with people accessing the Redress Support Service.



"Having a Link Worker who was always respectful, compassionate, gentle and understanding was great. The communication was excellent also. My Link Worker always called and emailed when he said he would."

-feedback shared about the Link Worker team

Creating positive relationships extends to the ways the Redress Support Service and Delivery Partners interact with other services.

For example, Birthlink noted examples of positive interagency working, between a person's social worker and support worker, in situations where additional support was required to assist people with learning difficulties. This demonstrates that collaborative approaches can enable the right kind of support.

In addition, Delivery Partners share examples of working together with record holders to support people with their record searches. They note that knowledge is continuing to grow as they understand more about the landscape and record-keeping practices.



131

131 people were connected with our Delivery Partners in Q4.



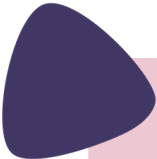
597

597 Subject Access Requests ("SARs") were submitted by partners in Q4 to 117 different record holders.

Improving relationships between Delivery Partners and record holders can benefit people in support. For example, as Delivery Partners gain a better understanding of processes, they are able to give applicants up-to-date information and better knowledge of timescales or backlogs.

In addition, such closer working with record holders can create empathy and understanding. Gaining knowledge of the challenges faced by record holders can allow Delivery Partners to see how they can work more effectively together.

This spills out into creating wider impacts, crucially for people in support: Delivery Partners are able to give detailed feedback and realistic timelines. In other instances, pro-active working can reduce waiting times or the need for extensive redactions. For people seeking their records, this is particularly important.



“It has been very helpful as I didn’t have a clue how to fill the forms out. Once you got involved it was fairly easy. It made a big difference just to know that you (Birthlink) could point me in the right direction.”

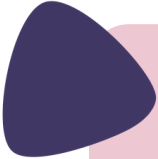
-applicant feedback
provided by Birthlink

People often share that going through the redress process can have a negative impact on their mental health because of the distress caused by memories resurfacing.

However, people have also expressed how such situations could be helped through accessing support with their wellbeing. For example, people shared that they were better able to manage their feelings in a “safer” way, and they were better able to prioritise their own needs and wellbeing. This could mean making time for self-care activities, recognising their own needs in relationships or opening up only the amount they feel able to cope with in that moment.

Accessing support throughout the journey also has the potential to contribute to profound changes, such as feelings of closure and being able to look towards the future.

People described a “weight off” or “release”, or that the experience was in contrast to the kindness missing in their childhood. Whilst these are outcomes of the redress process overall, we can see how support has contributed by providing space to talk through feelings, and offering reassurance and calmness in what can be an emotionally difficult process.



“You were very helpful, patient and understanding. Your communication was very easy and helpful and made me realise what I went through. I was able to talk to my family about my childhood.”

-applicant feedback
provided by Birthlink.

Spotlight: supporting people in prison

The Redress Support Service has supported 19 people from 8 different prisons. Getting in contact and arranging times for support was highlighted as a significant challenge, often requiring multiple attempts calling the prison and trying different ways to reach the person.

Link Workers reflected that these challenges mean people have less control over their support, for example in shaping how they would like it to be and being able to access it.

Link Workers shared how this can contribute to the person feeling more alone in their redress journey, that they may feel put off applying, or be concerned that the difficulties they are facing in applying will mean their application will be denied.

We know that applying to Scotland's Redress Scheme can be a very personal choice, often not openly shared with others. Link Workers reported people being concerned that emails and letters would be read by staff at the prison, and there can be a lack of a private space to speak on the phone.

However, we also saw instances of support within some prisons. For example a dedicated person within the prison staff team that is aware of the Redress Scheme and can liaise with all prisoners who wish to apply. Or, that staff a member's belief that it was people's right to apply made a big difference. Another example was given of a prison where multiple people were applying to the Redress Scheme and they were able to form a support group with each other.



August 2024

Redress Support Service is delivered by the In Care Survivors Alliance. The Alliance comprises four partners: Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service, Health in Mind, Penumbra Mental Health and the Scottish Government