

I went into Kildonah & Presbyterian Babies Home. The paper work said I was admitted on the 20th December 1965. I know this is wrong as I was in the home for my 16th birthday which was on the 17 December 1965. I remember that very clearly as my parents sent me a present. These untruths leave so many questions, what else did they lie about. I have since worked out this lie as I was only 15, they needed me to be 16 due to laws and children.

My baby was born at the Jessie McPherson Hospital 21 January 1966.

Tasmanian Apology regarding forced adoption

I did an interview with the local newspaper the words start off – Bound by her hands and feet, drugged whilst in labour frightened and alone – it is very well written. (I have included a copy of the newspaper)

Senate Inquiry

I got involved with the Senate inquiry in Tasmania. I have lived all my life in Tasmania, I was sent to Melbourne to have my baby. (I have enclosed a copy of my statement to the enquiry)

Hospital Records

Hospital records need to be made available so I can understand what really happened and what I was given and how much and for how long. I have written to many places they have come back with private doctors kept their own records. I even contacted the doctor's son so see if he knew anything about the records. I understood anything to do with adoption belonged to the government.

Statute of limitation

Lifting the statute of limitation was a recommendation of the Senate inquiry. It needs to be done we can't move forward while the churches, single mother homes and hospitals who treated us with no respect we were treated like animals there for them to take our babies and give them to someone else.

Apology

I went to Canberra for the apology which was delivered by Julia Gillard. She was amazing and it felt genuine. In my life now I find an apology worthless. If someone has a deliberate action and it causes stress, pain and torment to a person for the rest of their life. That leaves me feeling cold. I get that the government chose to apologies on behave of the institutions. That is why the statute of limitations needs to be removed.

Ex-gratia payment or Redress

I have contacted the Presbyterian Church in Victoria in the past their answer was since the churches merged we don't take any responsibility. We need acknowledgement an ex gratia payment.

I would also like to see some compensation for the treatment I received from the Jessie McPherson Hospital. When I heard the baby cry I twisted to look at a clock and couldn't move. I feel the twisting of my body at that time has caused the chronic pain in my legs and arms.

Mental Health and Body Trauma

I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyagia. I have needed physiotherapy, massages, and pain medications, anti depressants. I have had chronic pain caused by emotional situation which was not spoken about until 2011 (I have included a letter written by my psychologist). I still have the same health issues in 2019 54 years after their horrible treatment.

Monetary costs to me due to the treatment

We don't have private health It has cost so much money to try and keep getting up every morning. At the moment I have a massage once a month; I go to supervised exercises every week, I recently started taking turmeric capsules for the pain, its costing over \$200 a month and I am on a pension. The psychologists, councillors, doctor's appointments, physio, a rheumatologist. I've paid for all these myself.

Counselling

I have a wonderful relationship with Elizabeth Tomlinson from Vanish. They offer phone counselling.

I get Vanish news letter and information about counselling groups, they also have a library and outing, due to me being located in Devonport Tasmania unfortunately I am not able to participate. The federal government gave some funding to family services I went to a couple of their meeting and I found I knew more about forced adoption than the councillor. There were only about 3-4 people.

Leaving the home in February 1966

I was told by the matron at the home I couldn't leave until I signed the adoption papers and I had to have counselling with the church minister. I remember feeling so out of control it was like people who didn't know me or care were making huge demands on me. Just being told what to do like I wasn't even human or I didn't have any feelings. I so wanted to take my baby home with me.

The Church minister arrived and said now you have been a naughty girl doesn't do it again.

I have found out it was law to have counselling it's a shame the quality of the counselling I had left me with so many issues.

They took my baby off me something so precious they didn't treat me as a person with emotions and feelings. This little baby grew inside me. He was my baby, my beautiful baby boy who I never saw. Since the laws changed in Victoria we have had contact – its very challenging. I'm sure he still believes in his heart I gave him away.

I would like to see a TV campaign showing the babies who were taken from their mothers they were always wanted but churches and government thought they would be better off with married people.

I have participated in the Senate Inquiry; I went to Canberra for the apology I also contributed to without consent. My reason for all of this participation was to educate myself to hopefully try and understand and therefore enable me to cope better.

Barbara Pendrey

