

Episode 7, samsn's STRONGER: R E S P E C T / The National Redress Scheme
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The National Redress Scheme was established after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse recommended setting up a less traumatic, non-adversarial alternative to seeking compensation through the courts. Redress consists of three things: a monetary payment, access to counselling, and an opportunity to receive an apology from the institution, called a Direct Personal Response.

This 'How-To' explainer features a personal story from a survivor who sought redress through the National Redress Scheme. We'll also hear reflections from legal experts, a redress support service worker, and a counsellor. This episode is specifically designed to help potential applicants understand the scheme, its benefits, how to access it, and what they might be able to expect from the experience.

Featuring (in order of appearance): Tony Daly, Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM, Warren Strange (CEO, knowmore legal service), Elvis Caus (SAMSN, Planned Support Team Leader), Prue Gregory OAM (SAMSN, Policy, Advocacy & Stakeholder Relations Manager), Raelene Boxwell (SAMSN, Counsellor).

Thanks to:

The National Redress Scheme <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/>
Warren Strange and knowmore legal service <https://knowmore.org.au>

Music: Licensed via Audiio.com

TONY / FELICITY / ROB - Julep House: Wanted Man

TONY / ELVIS - Julep House: Back to Normal

PRUE - Philip Daniel: Against Transgression

ELVIS / TONY - Carinthia: Selah

CLOSING CREDITS - Seth Öphengon: A Safe Place (Instrumental)

SPEAKER	CONTENT
Rob Carlton	Welcome to SAMSN's 'Stronger', a podcast series featuring stories of resilience from male survivors of childhood sexual abuse, and their allies. In some parts it <i>is</i> heavy going, so if you're not in the space to listen right now, switch to something lighter. But do come back. We learn a great deal about surviving and growing stronger than your past from survivors.
Felicity Blake	If what you hear stirs up strong feelings, know that you can contact SAMSN at samsn.org.au , or on 1800 472 676, or give Lifeline a call on 13 11 14.
Tony D	My name is Anthony Daly or Tony Daly. I have resided in Sydney most of my life with stints overseas with my sport. My situation was announced to the community by the front page of a newspaper back in 2017. That was because, you know, I was an ex-Wallaby. I played for Australia for eight years with Rugby Union. And I think because, you know, if Tony Daly, an ex-Wallaby who played in the front row against the All Blacks and was abused and can come

	<p>out and tell people about it, well, it gives the people the confidence and the courage to do that.</p> <p>It was through SAMSUN that I found out about the National Redress Scheme. They suggested that I was entitled to it based on how my abuse has affected my living, my standard of life -- it played a very strong part in having a difficult run in life. So I thought, you know what, I'm not going to sit back and be a martyr about it. I am entitled to this.</p>
Felicity Blake	You're listening to STRONGER, a podcast from SAMSUN, Survivors' and Mates Support Network. I'm Felicity Blake, and this is our co-host, Rob Carlton.
Rob Carlton	<p>Thanks, Felicity. In this episode, we'll explore the National Redress Scheme, an initiative established in 2018 after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Later on we'll hear from Warren Strange, Chief Executive Officer of knowmore Legal Service, who'll talk us through applying for Redress, and SAMSUN's Rae Boxwell, Prue Gregory and Elvis Caus, who help survivors as they go through the Redress application process.</p> <p>We'll also hear more from former Wallabies player Tony Daly about what the Redress experience was like for him.</p>
Felicity Blake	<p>Redress offers support to people who survived abuse that <i>specifically</i> occurred in institutional settings, like a sporting organisation, school, mission, orphanage, foster care, youth club, juvenile detention, hospital, church, or a religious establishment.</p> <p>Redress consists of three things: a monetary payment, access to counselling, and an opportunity to receive an apology from the institution, called a Direct Personal Response.</p> <p>SAMSUN isn't a legal service, but it is one of the redress support services that specifically helps male survivors of childhood sexual abuse to work their way through the official process. There are also other redress support services offering similar assistance. You can find them listed on the National Redress Scheme website.</p>
Rob Carlton	It's important to remember that if the abuse happened in a non-institutional setting - like within a family, or neighbourhood - that there are other forms of justice or compensation that might be available to survivors, like statewide Victim Services Schemes, or civil litigation. A support service like SAMSUN can provide more information about these options.
Felicity Blake	Civil litigation means seeking financial compensation through the courts. The survivor gets a lawyer to sue either the perpetrator or the institution. This process depends on that perpetrator or institution actually having money to

	<p>pay, if there is a finding in favour of the survivor.</p> <p>The National Redress Scheme, however, was set up by the Federal government to provide redress for institutional abuse survivors. Here's Royal Commissioner, Robert Fitzgerald:</p>
<p>Robert Fitzgerald</p>	<p>Redress was a very important part of the consideration by the Royal Commission, because we fully understood that whether or not a person was able to be involved in a criminal matter, there was an absolute need for them to be able to receive some sort of recognition of the abuse that occurs. If the matter goes to court, and it's a civil case, then it's, you have to prove on the balance of probabilities that the event occurred. And the compensation that is paid is very substantial. It's in relation to not only direct injury, but also loss of economic earnings, for example, loss of wages, and so on. But for many people, that civil process is very difficult, extremely anxious and tension-inducing. It's also fraught with enormous costs and variability in terms of outcomes. So we wanted to establish a regime - a redress regime - that doesn't provide compensation. It provides a payment in recognition of the abuse that has occurred, which is quite different. And as a consequence of that it's lesser amounts, but the test is much lower, it is in fact that there was a likelihood that the incident occurred. The second thing to understand is: redress is about the culpability of the institution, not the culpability of the perpetrator. So in redress, you don't have to identify and prove that a particular person did a particular thing. What you have to do is to, on the low level test, is identify that the person, the child, was abused within the care of that institution. And that's quite different. And as a consequence of that, the test is lower, the payments are lower than what you might get in a civil court, but you have much more likelihood of actually achieving a positive outcome in respect of that matter. So redress is meant to be a recognition of the abuse that occurred with some regard to the impact that it's had on your life. But it's a very different nature to a civil case, where you have to have a much higher level of proof, or a criminal case where it's the highest level of proof, which is "beyond reasonable doubt".</p>
<p>Warren Strange</p>	<p>My name is Warren Strange, and I'm the CEO of knowmore legal service.</p> <p>Knowmore began back in 2013 in the early days of the Royal Commission, and really our service came into being because when the Gillard government announced the Royal Commission in 2012, the community legal sector in Australia made representations to government, which were basically saying that if you want people who've had the experience of institutional child sexual abuse to engage in this legal process and to tell their story to the Royal Commission, they need to have legal support so that they understand their options and their rights and they will need to be supported in that process. When the Royal Commission finished and delivered its final report at the end of 2017, our service was continued. And we transformed to helping people</p>

	<p>with advice about their redress options, including under the National Redress Scheme.</p> <p>The National Redress Scheme started on the first of July 2018, and the reason that we have the scheme is because it was recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. It was one of the most important recommendations made by the Royal Commission. It recognized that there is a need for survivors who experienced child sexual abuse in institutional settings to be able to receive acknowledgement of that experience in the form of redress. And for that to be done through an independent scheme that provided consistent outcomes across Australia. And that took decisions about redress out of the hands of the institutions that were responsible for people's abuse in the first place.</p> <p>The Redress Scheme was established to be a simpler and less traumatising alternative to bring in a claim through the courts for damages. It does have a cap on the maximum redress payment, which is \$150,000. So that might be less than someone could get by way of damages. But it has a lower standard of proof than a civil claim does. And it's meant to be a less traumatising process. It can still be a difficult process to apply, because survivors have to talk about the abuse that they experienced. And they have to, in order to put forward a complete application that maximises their entitlements to redress, they have to go into quite some detail about what they experienced. And that can be very traumatising still, for many people. But it's done by way of an application, there is no hearing, there is no need to give evidence. That application is assessed. Records are sought from the institutions that are named in the application by the survivor, and then a decision is made and an offer of redress is made if it's decided that that the survivor is entitled to redress.</p>
Felicity Blake	Warren will explain the three main components of Redress: the payment, the direct personal response (if you want one), and access to counselling.
Warren Strange	<p>The National Redress Scheme provides an acknowledgement to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse, and it does that through providing three separate components of redress. One is a redress payment, which can be up to a maximum of \$150,000. The second component of Redress that the scheme can provide - and this is at the election of the survivor - is to receive a direct personal response from the institution that was responsible for their abuse.</p> <p>And a way of thinking about the direct personal response is that it can be an apology, and it can be an acknowledgment made in a way that is meaningful for the survivor, acknowledging their experience and apologising for that.</p>

	<p>The third component is to provide access to counselling services. And in some states that's done through direct linking with counselling services, and in others, it can be done through the provision of a payment of up to \$5,000 to access counselling services in those locations.</p> <p>It's important for survivors to understand that the National Redress Scheme is designed to be a less adversarial and less traumatising alternative than bringing a claim through the courts. But it's important to understand that there are services like knowmore, and SAMSN, and the other redress support services that are very experienced in doing this work and working with survivors and supporting them, and making sure that they understand what their options are. And if they apply to the National Redress Scheme that their very best application is put forward, that sets out their experience and will maximise their entitlement to redress.</p>
<p>Felicity Blake</p>	<p>If a survivor believes they might be eligible for Redress, what's the first step they should take?</p> <p>Tony Daly connected with Redress via SAMSN.</p>
<p>Tony D</p>	<p>I think you just need to start asking questions as a person, as a victim. I think you just can't, you just can't wait for the mountain to come to you. You've got to go out and if you need help go to the website, find out when meetings are, find out where you can get some assistance, ring up and get a manager, approach somebody that can... that can help you. Because it's, it's close, but it's far away, because you need that type of process and stepping stone for you to get to where you want to be. But you must make the first initial step to do that.</p>
<p>Elvis Caus</p>	<p>My name is Elvis Caus and I'm the team leader of planned support at SAMSN. Firstly, obviously, get in touch, make that connection with SAMSN.</p>
<p>Tony D</p>	<p>I'd spoken to other fellowship members that have gone through the redress as well. So you know that through comfortability and support that they've had, it gives you confidence so you're not going over the trenches by yourself. You know that your classmates have applied for it as well and have had support so that made it easier.</p> <p>It made it easier because you just knew somebody was there that's in the system that's got experience. I was not the only candidate. There'd been many others before me. Well, you know, it's like... it's like climbing Everest. "Oh, what was it like?" "Well, this is what you're gonna cop when you go up to five thousand metres, and this is what's gonna happen to you at seven thousand..." So you can relate.</p>

<p>Elvis Caus</p>	<p>And if the goal is that we support you with redress, we would look to go through the steps with you, which means either meeting you through the phone (or in person when we can) to hear your story. And then we would go through the process of looking at the... researching the institutions that you have stated were part of the claim. And then we would look at what evidence you're bringing to the table through the application process. We'll go through the application with you, we would see if we can find additional supports that you would have, like counselling, and other supports. And we will go through the process of gathering that information so that we can complete the form... redress form together until the point that we are... you are comfortable and ready for it to be submitted to Redress.</p> <p>SAMSN works really closely with knowmore legal because we, simply, we're not lawyers. We've got to get that external support and assistance to get somebody who's able to give you that advice that SAMSN can't give you directly, and how we do that is we arrange those meetings. It can be by video or phone, and SAMSN stays with you through that process. So we will attend the meeting with you as a support, and we'll also make sure that you get the minutes and information from that meeting so that you have the information that you can take with you and make the decisions that you need to in terms of the redress.</p>
<p>Tony Daly</p>	<p>You know, knowmore have been terrific in regards to how people can make a choice and be there when you need them to be.</p> <p>What knowmore did: if you want it to go civilly, they recommended particular legal firms. If you needed some type of letter, to introduce you to something or maybe you need assistance from the government for what they can offer you, or any type of other legal matter, they'd be there for you. And it's all, what's the word, honorary? Free.</p>
<p>Warren Strange</p>	<p>There are private law firms that will do this work. And there are many private law firms that are running common law or civil claims for damages for survivors. Neither knowmore or redress services are able to act for survivors in those claims, so we refer them to private firms. But we do so on the basis that we have some strict criteria around who we refer survivors to, and that they must act for those people on a genuine "no win, no fee" basis.</p> <p>It's important to understand that there are services that, like knowmore and SAMSN and the other redress support services, are here and will do that work, and will do it well, and in a way that supports the survivor and we'll do it for free.</p> <p>We have heard of instances of survivors having to pay up to \$15,000 in legal costs for doing a Redress Scheme application. And as I've said, the</p>

	<p>alternative is that they could approach services like us and SAMSN, and have that work done where no fee will be charged to them at all.</p> <p>Of course, survivors are entitled to approach a private lawyer and to pay for that, if they wish. That's always their choice.</p>
Rob Carlton	Prue Gregory is a lawyer who works for SAMSN as their Policy, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations Manager. We asked Prue who is eligible to apply for Redress.
Prue G	They needed to have been a child when the sexual abuse occurred, so that's someone under 18. It needed to have been... have occurred within an institutional context. So, an institution was responsible for placing the survivor with the perpetrator or abuser. And it needs, importantly, to have been sexual abuse. Sexual abuse ranges from exposure abuse, such as grooming, right through contact abuse through to penetrative abuse. So if someone can get over all of those hurdles, they're the initial hurdles. There <i>are</i> some other hurdles: the person needs to be an Australian citizen or permanent resident. And there are difficulties if the person is currently in prison, or has had a sentence, one sentence, of five or more years, then they have a different pathway to go down to assess their eligibility.
Rob Carlton	If the abuse didn't happen in an institutional setting, knowmore can still help survivors with legal information.
Warren Strange	So that's the bulk of the work that we do now: we help survivors with their legal issues. And we do represent many survivors making their claims to the National Redress Scheme. We also help them with referrals to other services and information about other legal needs that they might have, so we still help people with making complaints to police and obtaining their records. Those sorts of issues.
Rob Carlton	The next part of the process is filling out the Redress application. Survivors can choose to do this with the advice of Knowmore, and the support of Redress Support Services like SAMSN. These services are free, and can be found on the National Redress Scheme website. Some people choose to approach the application on their own, or with their own sources of support.
Elvis Caus	The application comes in three parts. The first part is quite easy. It's just the general demographic information which we get from you, when you first engage with us. You know, we have our own intake process. So we make that quite easy. We can fill that in.
Rob Carlton	Part Two is the section that contains detailed questions about the abuse.

Elvis Caus	The next part is basically: what happened? And that's your story. What is really... what was the abuse? And all the aspects around that, so... And you may have shared that with us when you first came to SAMSN. So, in which case, you may not have to repeat that story again.
Felicity Blake	This was Tony Daly's experience:
Tony D	<p>It was quite hard, because I had to explain in quite explicit detail the activities that happened to me when I was at that age, when I was abused by the perpetrator. And that was, that was quite hard. But you know, it was necessary, given the fact of... for the National Redress Scheme to do their due diligence on it. That was that was quite difficult. But as I said, necessary. But sometimes you need to need to spill out, "Look, I'm having a bad day, I had a bad dream about this bloke who did this and that." So it's something which is a good bonus to have based on not being able to maybe pick up the phone just to anybody. And this is where you can do it with SAMSN, or you can do with your fellow classmates. So you've got two safety nets there.</p> <p>However, you know, it was a process, as I said, it took at least two to three weeks, maybe a month to get it right, filling out... filling out the application form, which (as you know) is quite thick!</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>Part three is what's called the Impact Statement. How that works is basically... Redress do have a table that you can refer to, you can only complete the table if you want, or you can complete a whole statement that goes along with that table. I would usually recommend both, because it shows detailed thought about what you've... It also complements the story that you've shared with, with us and also you're sharing with redress.</p> <p>So there's a reflection in there on a lot of things, including family, financial, life circumstances, health circumstances, it gives you a lot of options. What's good about the table is when you do tick those boxes, you can use that as a bit of a reference to actually write down the impacts it's had on you. So it does help in that sense.</p>
Tony D	Look, emotionally, particularly, then it gave you an indication of what adverse effect it's had on relationships, maintaining work, any type of consistent thing in your life, you know, PTSD. Any type of, you know, medication that you're on for either anxiety or depression. So it all comes into a category of how you can maintain... You know, like, just for example, you might have five or seven or eight jobs in three years. Well, there's something wrong with you, if you can't, you know...

	<p>And there's obviously issues with your sport, which you know, you're changing clubs, you know, different things that you keep changing, because you're not certain, and don't have the trust and the faith of maintaining one thing.</p> <p>So look, it just, it all depends on what your circumstances are, and how you achieved and what you did in regards to maintaining or not maintaining something. So it's all relevant.</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>That impact statement, some guys have sometimes chosen to take that on by themselves and complete at their own time and bring back. Sometimes they've sat with me, told the impact that it's had on them, and we've written that up for you to make it easier. And sometimes we've just done it, they've sent this to us via email to make it flow easier. So really, we're open to do that together to make it least traumatic for you.</p>
Tony D	<p>I could have probably... no, you know what, no, I don't think I could have done it by myself. No way. No, I think you need that, particularly when it came to the difficult questions of the activities that happened to you, I think it would have been out of the question that I needed some type of support from my case manager, which I got.</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>I know that sometimes we've had guys come to SAMSN, and they want to get straight into redress. They want to do the application, they want to tell their story, without so many supports around them. And that's often... has not worked well. The reason being is that - what I would suggest is, is really to have additional support, like a therapist or counselling, or that you've done one of the SAMSN groups, or you've had very good supports in place before we go down the redress route. The reason being that once we get to the part two of the redress application, which is "what happened", that often brings up so much memory, and trauma, and challenges for people because you are retelling one of the most painful and hurtful things from your past. And the detail that Redress do want on these can be quite clinical. Obviously I would go through that with you, we wouldn't be asking such clinical questions, we would get those kind of answers from the statements that you give us - but they do tend to really dig into exactly what happened, how it happened, who it was, and, and those descriptions. Because at the end of the day, they will need to connect how the institution was responsible, or how the perpetrator was connected to the institution, so that we may be able to present that in the best evidence when we apply for that redress.</p>
Tony D	<p>So for the whole guts of it, SAMSN was in the middle of everything. If I needed something done, or there was something that needed to be progressed or brought forward or recommended, I always went through SAMSN, which was the key, because it always got done. They had experience in doing it. They had many victims prior to me who needed assistance. So there was always</p>

	<p>that comfortability that you knew that it was going to get done. And it wasn't their first rodeo.</p>
Felicity Blake	<p>As well as applying for the redress payment, survivors have the chance to request a direct personal response from the institution which failed to protect them.</p>
Warren Strange	<p>One of the components of redress that the scheme offers is the opportunity for the survivor to receive a 'direct personal response' from the institution or the institutions that were responsible for their abuse. We often see survivors who unfortunately experienced abuse in multiple institutions, so there can be a number of institutions that might potentially be looked to, to provide that direct personal response.</p> <p>I would say about that option is that it's one that we and the redress support services will talk to survivors about. They have the opportunity to elect to receive a direct personal response. We will always be guided by what the survivor wants to do in that regard. And we acknowledge that for many survivors, they don't want to have any further contact with that institution at all. They're not interested in receiving any contact, whether it's in the form of an apology or acknowledgement. And we will respect that. We certainly won't endeavour to force anybody down a pathway that they don't want to go.</p> <p>We have had some experience where we have supported survivors with direct personal responses, and they have been very meaningful and been done in a trauma-informed and survivor-focused way. There is a framework that guides institutions, but I think it's fair to say that there is a level of difference in how many of the institutions approach the delivery of direct personal responses.</p>
Prue G	<p>Many of our clients have initially said they don't want to hear from the institution again. They received their redress payment, they received the access to counselling. And they have said "no" to the direct personal response or apology. Usually within three weeks, they are contacting us again, and saying I really do want to sit down with the Salvation Army or the Anglican Church or the state government. And I want them to hear what happened to me. And I want them to know how it's impacted my life. And more importantly, I want to know that it's not happening to kids today. And so that's been, we're actually doing that, we're actually facilitating, even though they've said no, initially, we're facilitating these additional direct personal responses outside the scheme.</p> <p>They have been vital to many of our clients who found that the money and the counselling actually wasn't really what they wanted. They wanted that apology. They really wanted to know that this is not happening to kids today. I think that's a message we need to get across as service providers in this area. How important it is, and what our clients are telling us, not that we just think it's</p>

	<p>important, but our <i>clients</i> are telling us that's the thing that made the difference in the redress scheme.</p> <p>The apologies that we've had feedback about have been really life affirming. So they're done by senior people within the institution. And a lot of our clients are reporting how fabulous it felt to be actually heard by a senior member of the church or of Scouts or whatever institution it was.</p> <p>My understanding is that most institutions, certainly the ones that I've had anything to do with, are very keen to listen carefully to what the survivor is actually asking for. So if they want a written apology, and a verbal apology, they are getting that. If they want a tree planted in the school grounds, they are getting that.</p>
Warren Strange	<p>It should, in our view, be a process that is focused entirely on the survivor and what the survivor wants. It shouldn't be about what the institution necessarily wants to do or say, it should be about what the survivor needs.</p> <p>We've been aware of instances where survivors have for example, wanted to have family members involved because they very much felt that the family has at times borne the brunt of what happened to them and the complex trauma that has resulted from their experience of childhood sexual abuse.</p>
Prue Gregory	<p>So I think what we as workers in this space, we need to encourage our clients to think "What is it that would really make a difference for you?" and it may for many of our clients be, "No I don't want to be in the same room as them, but I'd really love the name to be, of the perpetrator which is above the school library, I'd like that taken down". "I'd like, you know, a tree planted at the gate, or a plaque put somewhere". I think we really do need to encourage our clients to think what is it that's going to make a difference for you, and then try and facilitate that to happen.</p>
Tony D	<p>Getting a direct personal response will be something that would be very interested in, based on just the stepping stone to keep my rehabilitation, and also to keep things intact. Sometimes it's like a car really. You don't get it serviced, then you're gonna break down. So it's like anything really, you just need to be topped up with that assistance.</p> <p>And whilst you've got that entitlement and what you feel like you deserve, I don't think it's enough to really compensate or sugarcoat what's happened to you. I think, sure, in a small aspect, in a small way it <i>has</i>, but there's still a long way to go on acceptance. There's a long way to go of them putting their hands up and saying, "Yeah, we know we've got this issue".</p> <p>So they haven't... they haven't identified that they've got this issue. They work around it to say we're against it, we don't like it, we support the recovery. Well,</p>

	<p>you know, that's fine. You know, you can sugarcoat it. But the core of the problem is that what they've, what they've sort of... instituted as an organisation, and they haven't really, they haven't really fixed it.</p> <p>But look, it's it's complicated on each person's experience. And I think once you get that entitlement going, and once you feel you can do something, I think there's got to be a joint... some type of saying, "Well, you did this, and I want them to acknowledge it."</p>
<p>Warren Strange</p>	<p>We've also had experiences supporting Aboriginal survivors where they've wanted direct personal response to be done in a way that has cultural significance and cultural safety for them. And we've liaised with the institution to make sure that it has got on board and accepted that that is going to be how things need to be done.</p> <p>As of now, about 31% of all of knowmore's clients identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. So that's much more than the percentage of people who identify in the general Australian population. And that means that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were over-represented in institutions as children, and as survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.</p> <p>That came about because of past policies of forced separation from family, and institutionalisation comes about because of factors that are continuing now, such as the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in youth detention settings. So those factors have contributed to the reality that there are many, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are eligible to apply to the National Redress Scheme, and who are survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.</p> <p>We want to support all of those survivors in a culturally safe and appropriate way. And we have a dedicated Aboriginal engagement team that consists of male and female engagement workers in all of our offices, and we provide people with choice around working with a person of the gender that they're comfortable with, recognizing that that can be an issue for many survivors, including those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander as well.</p> <p>We have great cultural diversity in that team. So we're able to match survivors with people who are able to support them and ensure their cultural safety and security during their journey with knowmore.</p>
<p>Felicity Blake</p>	<p>Royal Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald considered the lifelong impacts of childhood sexual abuse...</p>
<p>Robert Fitzgerald</p>	<p>One of the challenges that the Commission acknowledged was, what do we do for victims and survivors. We've talked in the report extensively about reporting disclosure; reporting changes in processes and so on for criminal</p>

	<p>and civil actions. But the truth of the matter is: what are we doing in terms of their wellbeing and welfare generally?</p> <p>What we discovered was, and I think it was a revelation to many of us in the Commission - clearly not to victims and survivors - is that the impacts of sexual abuse in childhood can last a lifetime. It doesn't mean you need a lifetime of care. But many people go in and out of the service system, again, to counsellors, psychologists, psychiatrists, peer support groups. And they will... those needs arise because of different triggers, different events, different factors in people's lives.</p>
<p>Rob Carlton</p>	<p>Another benefit available from Redress is access to counselling. As knowmore's Warren Strange mentioned earlier, some states provide access to free counselling, and other states provide up to \$5000 to cover the cost of counselling.</p>
<p>Raelene Boxwell</p>	<p>My name is Raelene Boxwell, and I'm a social worker, and work as a counsellor for Survivors and Mates Support Network, SAMSUN.</p> <p>One of the really helpful things that a lot of men come to seek counselling for is how to manage things like anxiety, or how to manage flashbacks, or how to manage issues around panic. And... they find it really helpful to have some really practical tips on how to manage those things. Because it gives them some sort of sense of control of their body and their emotions. And you know, that can really help that sense of wellbeing, because if you have control out on the street or in a shopping centre or trying to get to sleep, then that really can help people's sense of wellbeing and control over their own lives that might not exist if they don't have those strategies.</p> <p>One of the really powerful aspects of joining together and sharing stories and sharing words about the impact that this has had upon their life is a reduction in shame, and a reduction in isolation, and a sense of hope, and a sense of being understood.</p> <p>Many of the men who I speak with one on one, really talk about the... the incredible shame that they've experienced, that this has happened to them. And they are able to articulate the ways in which they were entrapped in the abuse. But it was really hard for them to shift at a very deep level, that this wasn't their fault, that they weren't responsible for what occurred to them, even if they know that in their minds. It's really hard to shift that. But it's amazing, the power of sitting in another room, with somebody talking about a similar experience, and being able to go, "You know what? That happened to me, too. And if it happened to somebody else, then maybe - just maybe - this wasn't my fault. And maybe what the counsellor has been saying for years, or six months, is true: that it wasn't my fault."</p>

Felicity Blake	The counselling that survivors can access isn't just for emotional support. It's important to connect with the free financial counselling provided, too.
Rob Carlton	Payment amounts vary significantly, depending on the circumstances of an individual's case. But it can be quite a lot of cash to come into.
Warren Strange	<p>One of the components of redress that the National Redress Scheme can provide for survivors whose applications for redress are determined is a redress payment. And that is usually paid in a lump sum to the survivor. And it can be up to \$150,000 as the maximum payment, less any prior payment that is determined to be relevant.</p> <p>The scheme has recently been amended to allow for payments to be made by instalments in some cases, but that's a relatively new feature. So survivors who've applied up until quite recently have had their applications determined and have received lump sums. And that can be quite a significant amount of money. It's important also to understand that the laws which established the Redress Scheme provide some protection to that payment.</p> <p>For all those reasons, when the Redress Scheme started, our legal service was very much of the view that survivors who are receiving offers of redress should have access to trauma informed financial counselling services that are able to talk to them about what it might mean to receive a lump sum payment, and what they might like to do with that payment, but also the protections.</p> <p>But we also provide financial counselling help to people who haven't worked with us as clients, but may have done their own application or done an application through SAMSN or another redress support service, and have got an offer and want to get some financial counselling advice about how to protect their payment and, and how to maximise the benefit that they might get out of it. So that's really important work.</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>Financial counselling is something that's available for free from knowmore legal, as well as there's financial counsellors all across Australia. What I definitely would suggest in the time I've been here and observed: when you receive that redress outcome, it's a great outcome. However, all of a sudden, you are in possession of quite a bit of money, and while it seems fantastic, also with that comes other burdens and challenges.</p> <p>Why access financial counselling? And I would suggest you can access it even before you get that redress outcome, so that you know what you'd like to do with that money or where you'd like to put it, so that there's a bit of clarity for you, and for others. Because all kinds of things can come out of the... Unexpected things can come out of that outcome when it comes to money. So the safest decision would be to engage with a financial counsellor prior to getting that redress payment.</p>

Rob Carlton	As Tony Daly points out, it's important to have a plan so you don't blow your money all at once.
Tony D	I had to get my mental health plan, I had to get my medication, I had to get my PTSD sorted out. Because stuff like that, you know, what's the point of getting remunerated when you're not ready to get remunerated. You know, you're straight to the casino, and you're losing it in five days, that's not what it's about.
Rob Carlton	Many survivors want to know if this payment will affect their Centrelink benefit...
Prue Gregory	There are some Centrelink implications about having received this money. While it's not regarded as income, it does need to be declared to Centrelink as an exempt lump sum. And clients need to be able to do that properly so it doesn't impact on any benefits that they're receiving from Centrelink.
Rob Carlton	So, how <i>do</i> you prevent your payment from being eaten up by your debts?
Warren Strange	The laws also protect the redress payment from some other situations such as garnishee and bankruptcy proceedings, where someone who might be wanting to enforce a debt would seek to have access to the survivor's assets. So there are some quite technical considerations around that.
Prue Gregory	Clients who've been sexually abused as children will have, without doubt, really good reasons to at least to apply to have those debts waived on the grounds of financial hardship. Because if they can receive the redress payment 9, 12 months later, with no debts attached, it really does make it a whole lot easier for us, for the financial counsellors, and for the client themselves to get the maximum benefit out of that payment. So the takeout from this is: if you're listening to this podcast, and you're thinking about doing a redress application, and you have some existing debt, please go and see a financial counsellor and ask for some assistance to have those debts waived.
Rob Carlton	What about the option of choosing a private law firm to work with you on Redress?
Warren Strange	We are concerned about some of the practices that we're seeing, some of which are undertaken by private law firms, and some of which are undertaken by other businesses that are not law firms, but sometimes may have connections with law firms. And often these sorts of businesses are operated by someone who identifies as a survivor of abuse and then uses what effectively is a marketing campaign, based on their own experience, offering to provide services to survivors, such as gathering evidence, which then in turn leads to a referral to a private law firm.

	<p>And we have heard some very concerning accounts from survivors who have been approached by other operators at times. We've heard of accounts of people being cold called, for example, or confidential information about their status as a survivor being shared with family members when phone calls are made trying to contact them. Those sorts of things.</p> <p>And... my message would simply be to people to look at the options that are available to you. Ultimately, it's your choice as to who you want to work with and who you feel safe and supported by, but understand there are good, experienced, and trauma-informed services that will do this work with redress claims and will do it for free and can also help connect you with private law firms if you ultimately decide to go down the path of investigating what your prospects might be with a claim for damages. We would recommend that people always consider that option because of the possibility that ultimately the award of damages might be very much higher than a redress payment. Investigate that before you make a final decision. But be aware that there are good services to support you and to ensure that referrals are made to law firms that will work in a trauma-informed and supportive way with you.</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>There is no time limit toward the support that SAMSN offers to get their application done. Some folks have the information, they are actively involved, and we have completed the redress application in a couple of months. Others, we know we are human, there's things happening in our lives. And there's, you know, there's a gentleman that... he has had, very openly, a history of drugs and alcohol abuse. And for him, it was a struggle, because every time we spoke about this, it was retraumatizing. So I think eight months later, we're now just nearly completing his application, because it's taking him such a while. The good part is that he has connected with a very steady counsellor. He's been connected to me this whole time. So it is a journey. And SAMSN gets that.</p>
Felicity Blake	<p>So, once you've lodged your Redress application, what happens next?</p>
Elvis Caus	<p>Once the Redress application is submitted, SAMSN... obviously we will talk to you about and look at connecting you to what supports you need. And what I mean by that is: is there other services from SAMSN that you might need, like, you want to engage with the eight week group, the SAMSN counsellor, do you need another lived experience call? There may be other factors that you might feel, and supports that you need. You know, there might be issues with Centrelink. This is something that case management can still assist you. Otherwise, we will talk to you about connecting you to local services: is there anything locally that would be of benefit to you? You might just be quite simply happy to submit the application and you just want to have, stay with your therapist. That's fine. We obviously respect your choice and wishes. So it's a</p>

negotiation: we talk to you about it and give you the options so that we can find out what you'd like to do.

Now, the biggest challenge I think the guys sometimes face is, is the time wait that they have to wait, because Redress has four stages on their end that they go through once the application is submitted. And the biggest one is that guys then stress and wait for their redress application to come through. The best thing I could say about that is to continue living your life and engaging in those supports that I just spoke about before, and doing the best to engage in... just in your life.

Redress has four stages. The first stage is of them just getting to know the information that we've sent them. The second stage is the longest, which is called the investigation stage, which means they get in touch with the institution, there's a lot of back and forth until they finally get to the third stage, the independent decision maker who reviews all the information to make the decision. And the shortest stage is stage four, which is the outcome, which takes only a couple of days. But all those four stages can take potentially 12 months, under and/or over. So it's a challenge to give an estimate because it is something that we don't have control over, and we can only do our best to help you with waiting for that. And reassure you that once it's submitted, we have to be patient with that process.

I think in terms of just my observations around what would help this whole process, I think it's really... for the survivor to accept that this is going to be a journey, it's going to take time.

Once they've gone through the stages of redress, the outcome process is very swift and smooth and the outcome happens quite quickly in terms of the monetary outcome, the counselling outcome and also the direct personal response option that's there.

Receiving an outcome from redress is... it's such a wonderful moment to share with some of the survivors. I have been lucky to be part of several of those conversations. It's usually a joint conversation if you have selected SAMSNS to be a nominee as part of redress. We are invited to that shared telephone conversation with Redress. It doesn't last very long but it's really a joyful opportunity for the client to receive a monetary outcome, and then also, with that comes the complimentary counselling and also the direct personal response.

I mean, I've spoken to the guys after that phone call with Redress, you know, and they've been... they've been in tears, and they've been happy. And just that acknowledgement of the hurt and pain that they've experienced, is incredible. You know, there's a, there's a huge lift, there's that recognition. I

	<p>can't even tell you the, the words that they express, you know. I'm getting quite emotional just thinking about it, because it's, it's so good to see them get to that outcome, because they've been waiting for so long for someone to say, "I acknowledge that this happened to you." And it's a very precious moment to be, to have been part of that.</p>
Tony D	<p>I mean, there's still a lot of people out there that haven't come forward. And there's a lot of people that maybe don't know about this, this group, this organisation.</p> <p>You know what, I didn't know what to expect. But when I, when I went through it, I was pleasantly surprised. Even though there was difficult moments, it was something which I was able to handle quite comfortably because I had that support there.</p>
Rob Carlton	<p>If you're a survivor thinking about applying for Redress, you have until June 2027 to start your application.</p>

Closing Credits

Rob Carlton	<p>SAMSN is the only specialist charity in Australia dedicated to helping all male survivors of child sexual abuse and their families.</p> <p>Each year, SAMSN provides free services to hundreds of male survivors and their supporters.</p> <p>SAMSN believes that male survivors of child sexual abuse can recover and thrive.</p> <p>Help him believe.</p> <p>Donate today. Visit: samsn.org.au (that's s-a-m-s-n).org.au</p> <p>Remember to rate and share this online, because it helps others - especially survivors - to find it.</p>
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Felicity Blake	<p>STRONGER was created for Survivors and Mates Support Network entirely remotely during the pandemic of 2020 and 21. It was produced and directed by me, Felicity Blake of The Dove Media, with Julie Blyth of SAMSN. Our Executive Producer is Craig Hughes-Cashmore. Interview help from Les Spencer and Shane Greentree. Audio editing by Dion Brooks. Transcript assistance from Dr Anna Kamaralli and Melanie Teychenne-King. A big "thank you" to our co-host and SAMSN Ambassador, Rob Carlton. Very special thanks to all 32 of our participants; your insights make others STRONGER.</p>
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