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### **Little support for victims of child sexual abuse**

Key recommendations of the Mullighan Inquiry into child sexual abuse on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands have still not been addressed, a year after the Inquiry's findings were tabled in State Parliament.

UnitingCare Wesley notes that, in conducting the Inquiry, Commissioner Ted Mullighan uncovered disturbing gaps and weaknesses in the delivery of counselling and therapeutic services to Aboriginal children who have been sexually abused.

Specifically, Commissioner Mullighan called for "long-term" funding to be provided to enable victims of sexual abuse to access appropriate therapeutic services. (Recommendation 8)

He also recommended that there be a "substantial" increase in the delivery of therapeutic services to people on the APY Lands who were sexually abused as children. (Recommendation 16)

UnitingCare Wesley believes these recommendations sit at the very heart of what needs to be done to deliver an appropriate response to incidents of child sexual abuse.

"While the State Government has taken decisive action on some fronts, UnitingCare Wesley remains very concerned that new funding has not been allocated to address these core recommendations," said Mr Jonathan Nicholls, Manager Indigenous Policy and Advocacy.

"The Government has tended to respond to these recommendations with descriptions of existing services, even though Commissioner Mullighan found those services were insufficient and overstretched." Mr Nicholls said.

UnitingCare Wesley is calling on the South Australian Government to include long-term funding for counselling and therapeutic services in next month's State Budget.

#### **Further comment**

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