

# HIA Interim Advocate

## PRESS RELEASE

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Following today's announcement by the First Minister and deputy First Minister that the Historical Institutional Redress Board is open for applications, Brendan McAllister, the Interim Advocate for victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse said:

"I want to congratulate the representatives of HIA groups who played an influential role in designing the redress scheme.

"It is also important to note that the Executive Office have delivered on the promise made to victims/survivors in November, to get the redress scheme off the ground by the start of April. In that regard, the President of the Redress Board, Mr. Justice Colton, and his staff have done tremendous work in such a short period of time".

But Mr. McAllister warned of difficulties now facing the delivery of the scheme.

He added: "There is no doubt that the Covid19 crisis will complicate the operation of the HIA redress scheme: it will take longer to access medical notes from GPs; to get records from the Public Records Office; to work with solicitors and for civil servants and my own staff having to do so much of their work from their homes.

"I would appeal to victims and survivors to apply to the redress scheme but allow some flexibility in these difficult times. However, in spite of all the challenges which beset us in these days, today is a great day; it opens a new and positive chapter in the HIA story."

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