

## Stolen Generations want a commitment on aged care

Eleven years on from the National Apology, members of the Stolen Generations are calling on governments to ensure aged care services are sensitive to their needs and support publicly funded alternatives to residential care that deal with trauma related issues arising from re-institutionalisation.

It follows the release of data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare that uncovers alarming and disproportionate levels of disadvantage for Stolen Generations aged 50 and over.

Chair of The Healing Foundation's Stolen Generations Reference Group Ian Hamm said the data draws a clear distinction in the health and welfare outcomes between ageing Stolen Generations and the general Indigenous population.

"Even compared to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders contemporaries, who are already at a disadvantage in Australia, Stolen Generations members aged 50 and over are suffering more – financially, socially and in areas of health and wellbeing," Mr Hamm said.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were removed from their families are two times as likely to have been incarcerated and almost three times as likely to rely on government payments, compared to those who were not removed as children.

"We've just been scratching the surface. We need government and service providers to commit to long term and widespread healing programs, trauma informed resources and culturally appropriate care."

The AIHW report forecasts that by 2023 all remaining Stolen Generations survivors will be eligible for aged care. The data shows that 89 per cent of those aged 50 and over were not in good health and 76 per cent relied on government payments as their main source of income.

The Healing Foundation CEO Richard Weston said the report provides a clear evidence base to the complex needs of Stolen Generations aged 50 and over who suffered profound childhood trauma when they were forcibly removed from their homes, isolated from family and culture and often institutionalised, abused and assaulted.

"While appalling, this level of disadvantage should not come as a surprise. If people don't have an opportunity to heal from trauma, it continues to impact on the way they think and behave, leading to a range of negative outcomes including poor health and isolation, which in turn leads to social and economic disadvantage," Mr Weston said.

"The Aged Care Royal Commission has been running for less than a week and we're already hearing about the profound trauma experienced by those in care. Clearly, the Stolen Generations need and deserve assistance in their aging years, but given their past experiences with institutionalisation, it's vital that we find public funded alternatives that respond to trauma related issues."

**Media Contact: Ben O'Halloran - 0499 877 441 or [ben@healingfoundation.org.au](mailto:ben@healingfoundation.org.au)**