

10 April 2026

Joint Standing Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: [redress@aph.gov.au](mailto:redress@aph.gov.au)

## Inquiry into the continuing operation of the National Redress Scheme – response to questions on notice

Relationships Australia thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide evidence on Friday, 13 March 2026.

During the hearing, we took on notice a question regarding waitlists for Redress Support Services, as well as questions from Senator Smith specific to service delivery in Western Australia.

### *Waitlists*

In our submission to the Inquiry, and evidence provided at the hearing, we noted that across a number of member organisations in the Relationships Australia Federation, waitlists for Redress Support Services have increased, with members noting significant spikes in demand arising both from targeted outreach (for example, to prison populations) as well as greater general awareness of the Redress Scheme itself.

Work continues to ensure that those clients who are on a waitlist receive support as soon as possible, and this has been supported recently with additional funding from the Department of Social Services, as well as cross-referrals between providers of Redress Support Services. On top of this, we note that individual staff working within the program hold very high caseloads as they work tirelessly to provide the support that is needed.

It is nevertheless the case that waitlists do still exist in some jurisdictions and, as stated in our evidence, there has been one situation where a member organisation was required to partially close their waitlist. This partial closure related to referrals from within the prison population in South Australia, and commenced in February 2024. This closure was necessary due to the significant rate of referrals being made through the prison system in South Australia, and the reality that if that rate continued, it would be impossible to support those new clients prior to the Scheme's scheduled closure date. At all times, Relationships Australia has continued to accept referrals from people in the South Australian community.

As an example of the ongoing demand for Redress Support Services, we advise that the current waitlist in South Australia is 269 people (though we note this is down from over 600 due to the ongoing efforts described above) and in Western Australia the waitlist is currently 56 people.

*Service delivery in Western Australia*

In response to Senator Smith’s queries about the delivery of outreach services in Western Australia, we advise that Relationships Australia does not offer outreach support in the Kimberley. We understand that the Kimberley region is covered by alternative providers.

In relation to the numbers of clients supported in Western Australia in recent financial years, we advise as follows:

	2024-25 Financial Year	2023-24 Financial Year
Redress Support Services (# clients)	624	623
Find and Connect services (# clients)	279	269

*Conclusion*

In closing, we make the observation that the experience of waitlists for Redress Support Services, and the steady demand for those services across the country, is further evidence that the current operational timeline for the National Redress Scheme is inadequate and that additional time will be required to ensure that everyone who is eligible but has not yet applied is able to do so.

If the Committee would like to discuss this, or any of the other matters raised in our submission, further, please do contact me (at [REDACTED]) or Dr Susan Cochrane, National Policy Manager, Relationships Australia ([REDACTED]).

We thank the Committee again for the opportunity to contribute to this Inquiry

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Nick Tebbey  
National Executive Officer