

7 October 2025

Dear Committee

[REDACTED]

I have forwarded this detailed reference for your consideration with a view to ensure that the timeframe and scope of Redress and the Inquiry is widened to incorporate this small but relevant Mother & Baby institution. All my efforts to name and include The Castle have been ignored and dismissed by all relevant actors including commissioned academics of the QUB/UU REPORT OF 2021, TEO, the Truth Recovery Panel, government agents participating on the Consultative Forum et al. This online reference clearly states a case for inclusion. The Castle was one of 22 institutions named and listed for investigation within the remit of the Commission of Investigation into Mother & Baby Homes in Ireland 2021 despite being the smallest type of facility.

The pro-life NI organisation named CURA which was part of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference and which became defunct in 2016 sent many girls and women pregnant and/or with newborns across the border until it closed its doors in 2006. We are justifiably adamant that it be included in the Inquiry and Redress.

In terms of my previous presentation and evidence of September 2024 regarding Anatomical Issues, I would respectfully ask if the Committee has had any updates/follow-up on the issues with Queen's University namely: memorialisation, verifying where the final resting place is of over 600 remains that it has consigned to Private returns with no paper trail to prove that claim and any clarity circa Consent issues for release and acquirement of remains from relatives and relevant institutions, digitisation and creation of an archive and database for accessibility and information and whether it plans to do , as I requested, commit to press media and public statement of awareness on the matter.

I would also like to know the position of the Committee under Chair Sinead McLaughlin following its call in March 2022 for an Independent Inquiry if matters remain unresolved? It remains a huge concern that the Independent Panel research did not care to mention the Anatomical Issues in its recent Interim Report and when questioned by Sinead on this it replied that it was part of an ongoing investigation. All of the Inquiry issues were and remain part of ongoing investigations. This Panel response highlighted by pre-existing doubts of robust investigation into this given [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Conflict of Interest as a current [REDACTED] employee whilst Queen's is under scrutiny and investigation for questionable practices.

I would also like to submit additional information circa the issues on redress payments. There is as yet no consideration in structuring the Standard and Individual Assessments on losses. Losses pertain to potential financial earnings when women were admitted and exploited for cheap and free labour, depending on the era/period of state welfare benefits that were applicable. State benefits were often signed over to pay for the 'keep/maintenance' of women e.g. family allowance which were claimed by religious orders etc on behalf of the internee/inmate. Others were simply trafficked, meaning used in financial exploitation to provide various types of work for contracts and industries/commercialism that religious were involved with, including paid forced adoptions domestically and internationally, forced labour. Evidence is extensive of

these enterprises, North and South of Ireland. An example being the records held in PRONI that I accessed pre-2019 during the course of my own investigations and research, that confirm communications from local and private contractors and their representatives in writing complaints and criticism to government e.g. Ministry of Home Affairs regarding the cheaper costs/undercutting provided by the Good Shepherds Sisters in securing and maintaining laundry contracts with the US and British Army around the era of World War 2. They could naturally provide this cheaper service due to the nature of its free and/or cheap workforce/labour via girls and women in the Mother & Baby and Magdalene Laundries. These issues were stated in the 2021 QUB/UU Report. Religious Orders had contracts with HASBRO the US giant toy-making company and many other global companies. Potential financial/monetary loss due to time spent and unpaid labour etc within the money and profit making industries that religious and other actors were engaged in. These same religious/secular bodies have continued to reinvent and repurpose their commercial enterprises in successive years with hospitals, care/residential homes, anti-trafficking exploits etc. Losses can also be potentially attributed to lack of educational attainment and social mobility as girls, women and their babies and children would be affected in many complex ways by trauma and incarceration/institutionalisation, personal/intellectual/psychological underdevelopment and the inevitable associated harms, violations and abuses. I respectfully recommend that all legislators, Executive (OFM/DFM incl.) Office and Executive Committee members read, analyse and discuss all relevant reports associated with these issues i.e. QUB/UU Report January 2021; Commission of Investigation into Mother & Baby Homes in Ireland 2021; Truth Acknowledgement and Accountability Report of October 2021 in order to be best informed, educated, aware and familiarised with the vast complex of issues. Historical and contemporary context are key to best possible understanding, compassion and decision-making.

Another matter not being fully, honestly and openly disclosed are the events and outcomes of the government initiative that was the Access to Records Adoption Practice Steering Group of July 2021 that lasted until June 2023. This group was initiated in February 2021 as a concept to try and write new non-statutory guidance for social workers within the Adoption and Permanence Teams of the five Health Trusts. At initial discussions I had stated that it was necessary to engage legal advice as early in the process as possible due to the complex nature of the undertaking. Very quickly we discovered in discussions and meetings that the Information Commissioner's Office was not equipped to deal with the complexities, sensitivities and nuances of historic adoption when it was first established. Within a few months the four victim/survivor representatives, including myself, recommended involving a GDPR /Data protection expert which eventually materialised as a legal expert we heard of who had represented many affected people in the Republic on issues around birth information and tracing and legal matters arising from the various redress, GDPR etc issues there. He attended a few meetings, and compiled a Decision Tree as a guide to making and balancing decisions and rights of all parties requesting information. He was allegedly paid by the Department of Health a sum of £15000 for a few weeks of work and then disappeared. We could not contact him or ask advice etc as of course the Department, not us, became his client. Long story short, after almost two years, with an almost six month hiatus of inactivity and no communication nor meetings, the Group resumed to finally work on drafting and redrafting the guidelines that we had worked painfully on.

When the final draft was compiled it was sent to department officials and legal advice for sign off. One big insurmountable barrier became the issue of whether or not and how to disclose or not disclose Third Party and Mixed Data. This was and still has not been resolved. With the final draft that we collectively submitted, last stage we were told by the Department that we could individually-only, not a group collective/collaboration, present our thoughts and opinions. therefore we had ultimately no agency or sight of whether anyone agreed or objected to the final draft. I objected strongly to this aspect of the process AND the outstanding obstacle that the Third Party/Mixed Data was to retain its historical position of virtually a blanket refusal to disclose information, mainly due to what will be social determination of what is relevant to a requestor based on their subjective determinations. This matter is ongoing and unresolved. I was the only Group participant who refused to sign-off on this guidance as it does not meet the necessary standards nor entitlements of adopted adults with non-statutory guidelines and a major issue unresolved. GDPR/Data Protection and outdated policies and procedures are in some cases protecting and providing cover for named perpetrators and facilitators of malpractices and illegal/criminal wrongdoing. When I asked for a copy of my social services / adoption file I was originally refused. Five years later I re-applied and was granted a supervised viewing under conditions of being supervised closely by two social workers in the room and not permitted to take photos, notes or receive a copy of the entire file despite a permitted viewing thereby allowing me full view of Third Party and Mixed Data(which I am now denied) contained therein. The Department of Health legal team decided I cannot receive a copy of the full unredacted file. Redaction and summary records was intended as integral to Truth Recovery and a task to be undertaken by the Archivist/Data protection and legal expert members appointed to the Truth recovery Independent Panel to ensure maximum disclosure for all relevant requestors in sync for those who may testify in a timely fashion prior to the Inquiry and Redress scheme, and avoid unacceptable and potentially traumatic HIA scenarios of disclosure minutes before people testifying to HIA sessions. Adopted people can apply to view their court file related to the adoption and take notes on that file under supervision but court access is entirely at the discretion of the judge attached to the court where your court file is stored. There exists no criteria to mandate or guide a judge that we are aware of therefore an application is a judge-led lottery of discretion. This is pure randomised discrimination.

I am happy to present any further detail and evidence where needed and requested by the Executive Committee.

Regards

[REDACTED]  
Adoptee, activist, advocate

8 October 2025

Thank you for your email.

One thing I forgot to mention is the disadvantage some of us, especially those who spent so much time doing our own research, building up knowledge, co-writing legislation and amendments North and South of Ireland, investigations, building up wider domestic and international context, helping reunite families and trying to establish truth and discovery of the disappeared and deceased etc etc whilst holding down full time jobs, do not unfortunately have the flexibility of time to attend even a few of the events and platforms predominantly held during normal working hours and weekdays. Compiling substantial submissions based on the more knowledge and experience you have becomes an even greater challenge. More events should really be arranged out of those normal work day hours to accommodate more affected and interested people. Some events are also much too short in timeframe for example if good numbers attend its more than difficult to get adequate airtime when others sometimes need and deserve equal opportunity. Two hours for those sessions potentially is a very short window under certain circumstances. The reason I suggested legislators and parliamentarians read all relevant Reports etc is designed to reduce time we spend on providing historical and educational context aside from opinion.

Regards

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