

Welcome and introduction to the survivors of Wolston Park

15 June 2017

Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck, Queensland Mental Health Commissioner

The women you will hear from tonight represent 50-60 Queensland children who were wards of the State, and were placed in an adult mental health facility between the 1960s up to the early 1980s.

All of the women you meet tonight spent part of their teenage years incarcerated in the Wolston Park psychiatric hospital along with adults, both male and female, including some sent there by the criminal justice system for horrific acts of violence.

They had committed no crime. They did not have a mental illness. They had stood up to abusive authority in children's institutions.

They have fought for acknowledgement and redress, and in 2010 finally received an apology from the State and a commitment to consult them on what more would go some way to providing redress for what they endured.

That consultation has now commenced and I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Health who did not hesitate to progress this when I raised it with him last year. He will be here shortly.

His public statement on radio in March this year reinforced his commitment and for that we must thank him, because no other politician has shown this compassion over the decades since it was brought to the attention of the governments and the bureaucracy.

We cannot undo the past, but we can do everything we can to improve the future.

To learn more about their stories, I will shortly introduce you to some of the strongest and most incredible people I have met.

