



# COMPASSION IN CARE

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## **Response to the Government's call for evidence on the implementation of the Leveson Inquiry**

I am contributing to this consultation due to my own experiences as one of the [BUPA 7](#) whistle-blowers who witnessed widespread abuse and torture of vulnerable elderly people, and the evidence I have compiled over many years as the founder and director of the charity [Compassion In Care](#) which exposes abuse of vulnerable people and campaigns for [Edna's Law](#) to protect the vulnerable by protecting whistle-blowers.

We have been contacted by over four thousand whistle-blowers of which 70% are from the healthcare sector. I am also the co-founder of [The Whistler](#) which supports whistle-blowers from all sectors eg education, prisons and probation, child protection, armed forces, aviation, financial, retail and many others.

Please see the links for our published evidence: [Breaking The Silence](#)

It is as a result of my experience with all of the above that I submit my evidence.

## The Two Groups

I would submit that the needs of two groups of people need to be considered:

**Group 1.** Those who have been on the receiving end of the very worst kind of media coverage.

**Group 2.** The vulnerable, the abused and neglected, the victims of injustice, misconduct in public office, avoidable harm and death, crime, corruption, fraud and all the acts of indifference or intent that result in harm to the public interest.

**If Group 1 gains any protection at the cost of Group 2 then that is wrong and yet that is exactly what Leveson proposes.**

## Impress and funding

Impress is a privately funded organisation set up by wealthy people with their own agenda. Wealthy individuals cannot and must not be allowed to dictate the rules or to control the media by stopping publication of good investigative journalism, and presenting truth in the public interest because that is exactly the core of the problem with Murdoch's empire, and once that line is crossed, it is done at our peril.

I have seen first hand how funding sources can result in conflict of interest. As a charity (the only charity fighting elderly abuse that has **never** and will **never** take funding from Government or the care industry) we are able to serve our aims at **all** times without compromise.

I do not accept that Impress is independent, it is compromised as an organisation. When such organisations are deemed fit to act as a **regulator** then we really have reached the point when the public need to be protected **not by** regulators **but from** regulators.

I give the following as an example of why independence is essential. We visited undercover over 60 Southern Cross care homes and exposed abuse of vulnerable people. This was at a time when senior management of this company were earning millions. The charity Action on Elder Abuse was accepting regular and substantial funding from Southern Cross. Action on Elder Abuse did not defend Southern Cross, they simply declined to comment at all. Compassion In Care was able to state facts without fear because we have complete independence.

Our only allegiance is to truth and the victims of abuse, not to wealthy people or organisations. This is why we are contributing to this consultation to ensure that the voices of the whistleblowers and those they seek to protect (ie Group 2) are heard.

## **Section 40**

This will result in important stories in the public interest not being published. The barriers to overcome in getting a story published are already sufficiently tough and my fear is that what will be assessed is not the truth but the cost of printing the truth. There is also the question of judges punishing those found innocent of any offence.

## **Further Leveson Inquiries**

There is no need for any further Leveson inquiry and it is a shame that this is even being considered given the amount of injustice awaiting any inquiry at all.

We need to separate the two issues: An inquiry into Murdoch is necessary but the need for this should not be confused or masked by the suggestion that all journalists are the problem. They are not, it is a few rotten apples. Murdoch's excessive power over our media can never be tackled effectively if the public is being distracted by a witch hunt against the media as a whole.

Investigative journalists must be free to report the truth without fear of any kind of retribution, and Section 40 would silence them and that is why it cannot be allowed to be enacted.

## **The Gavin MacFadyen Award**

This award will take place later this year as planned, but in light of the current events we are presenting a special inaugural award to every news publisher who refuses to sign up to Impress, in recognition of their services to the public interest and freedom of speech.

**Eileen Chubb**  
**10.01.17**