



For Immediate Release: Friday 5 December 2025

PRESS RELEASE: *Uncovering of further burial ground at Tuam and discovery of human remains marks an urgent appeal from the Special Advocate for all institutional sites to be examined fully to identify burial sites and have Dignified Burial for all who died in institutions.*

The Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse, Patricia Carey notes the recent update from the Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention Tuam (ODAIT) in relation to the infant or child remains at the site of Tuam Mother and Baby Institution.

These findings in Tuam signal the need for a clear and urgent government response to locate burial grounds in other institutions for Dignified Burial and Memorialisation for all who died in institutions.

- **All institutional sites where there are unidentified burial grounds must be fully investigated to ensure the identification, preservation and marking in a dignified and agreed manner with Survivors and their families of all remaining burial sites of children and adults who died in institutions.**
- **A Human Rights-based approach is required from Government, ensuring equal access to redress measures, including Dignified Burial and Memorialisation, for all Survivors across all Institutions**

The Special Advocate Patricia Carey acknowledges that the confirmed identification of infant or child remains at the site of the Tuam Mother and Baby Institution is a deeply upsetting and painful development for Survivors and their families today. She expresses her sympathy to all those affected by this update at Tuam, in particular to those Survivors who have been seeking information on their family members for decades.

Dignified Burial continues to be a key issue raised with the Special Advocate by many Survivors and Affected Persons, Survivor Groups, family members, and other stakeholders.

This matter continues to cause immense distress, pain and upset to Survivors and Affected Persons and their families. Many Survivors and their families lack basic information about their deceased children or family members.

- **Where are the burial records for each person who died in the institutions?**
- **Where are the exact burial locations for children and all those who died in institutions?**
- **When will we have dignified burial grounds and memorialisation for all those who died in institutions, including accessible space and places for family members to visit and mourn?**



Patricia Carey, the Special Advocate for Survivors said;

“Determining and fully understanding the exact location of burial sites is critical to progressing dignity for all those who died and for their families. Furthermore, consideration of this is particularly urgent in sites which are in private ownership and are currently under development.”

Ms Carey said;

I have visited many sites including Sean Ross Abbey, Bessborough and Castlepollard institutions where the burial grounds of the mothers and children who died there are not known (from 1921-1998 over 15% of all children born in institutions died – over 9,000 children).¹

The Special Advocate calls for urgent consideration to be given to identify, preserve and mark in a dignified and agreed manner, all remaining burial sites of children and adults who died in institutions.

A Human Rights-based approach is required to ensure equal access to Redress for all Survivors, including those who are deceased. The principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’, equality and fairness should underpin all redress measures including dignified burial and memorialisation – and this should be applied to **all sites** and to **all Survivors**.

It is incumbent on the Government as we are modern, moral and kind nation who value and honour our dead, to finally identify the final resting place of those who died in these institutions.

ENDS

¹ Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes 2021, Executive Summary page 4. Link: [Executive Summary](#)



**Special
Advocate**
For Survivors of
Institutional Abuse

For interviews / comment please contact:

Patricia Carey, Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse

- **Phone Number:** +353 1 511 7660
- **Email:** info@specialadvocate.ie

About the Special Advocate for Survivors

The appointment of a Special Advocate for Survivors fulfils a core commitment in the Government's Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions, which contains a number of measures designed to address broader experiences of institutional trauma and forced family separation. This Action Plan recognises that the response of Government to the legacy of these institutions must be directly informed by the voices of those most centrally affected.

The Special Advocate's remit encompasses Mother and Baby Institutions, County Home Institutions, Magdalene Laundries, Industrial and Reformatory School Institutions, and related institutions, and those adopted, boarded out or the subject of an illegal birth registration.

The role of the Special Advocate for Survivors is to:

- ensure that the views of Survivors and Affected Persons are central to the delivery of the State's response to the legacy of institutional abuse and forced family separation
- promote the collective interests of Survivors and Affected Persons, as expressed by them, and amplify their voices as a central, essential input to Government deliberations on matters which affect them.

The Special Advocate is operationally independent of Government.

About Patricia Carey

Patricia Carey has been in the role as Special Advocate for Survivors since 25 March 2024. Patricia Carey served as the CEO of the Adoption Authority of Ireland from 2014 to 2022, leading the Authority's work on the Birth Information and Tracing Act. Prior to this role she held the position of Director of Services for St Vincent De Paul, and has also held various volunteer leadership roles, including Chairperson of Connect Counselling for Survivors of Institutional Abuse and a founding member of Outhouse resource centre for the LGBT+ community. As an adopted person born in a Mother and Baby Institution, Patricia Carey brings a unique perspective and dedication to her work.

Email info@specialadvocate.ie Phone +353 (0)1 511 7660

Address Special Advocate's Office, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2 D02 EY84, Ireland