

# Sex abuser's 'conveyor belt' of victims

JESSICA GREWAL

Upstairs and down the corridor in an old building, at one of Queensland's most prestigious schools, two heavy doors and a red light guarded the sanctum of predator.

Inside, glorified father figure, mentor and respected guidance counsellor Kevin John Lynch would hypnotise and sexually abuse untold numbers of boys at Brisbane Grammar School, convincing them the depravity they experienced was a "therapy".

The horrors in the pedophile's office between 1973 and 1988 were the focus of day one of the child abuse royal commission's inquiry into both Brisbane Grammar and St Paul's School, where Lynch later also served as a counsellor.

The commission is also looking at how St Pauls came to hire both Lynch and another pedophile, Gregory Robert Knight, who sexually abused students in three states before finally being jailed in the Northern Territory.

In his opening address, counsel assisting, David Lloyd, outlined

the evidence of several victims who were abused by Lynch, known to students as "Skippy" for his hobbled walk, in a clinic-like office smelling of sanitiser and stocked with tissues and towels.

Mr Lloyd said one witness thought of Lynch as a "mentor and life guru", even inviting him to make a speech at his 21st birthday party. The witness had not fully comprehended he had been abused until Lynch committed suicide in 1997, the day after his arrest for the sex abuse of another victim.

Later, that witness told the inquiry Lynch told him he could harness the power of orgasms to "gain an edge" in life. He said Lynch regularly masturbated him to ejaculation, sometimes made him ingest his own semen and injected acupuncture needles into his testicles.

The witness said the design of the office created a "secure conveyor belt of victims". The commission heard students could enter only when a light outside turned green, and separate entry and exit doors made it impossible

to know who had been in the room beforehand. Given that set-up and the fact rumours circulated about Lynch's visitors "being jerked off", he found it hard to accept no one knew about the abuse.

The commission heard students complained about Lynch to former Brisbane Grammar headmaster Maxwell Howell but nothing was done. Howell "steadfastly denied" the claims until his death.

Eventually, 65 victims received settlements for Lynch's abuse.

Another witness said he hoped the inquiry would spark change in

the criminal justice system to make it mandatory for accused pedophiles to be held in custody until their court date. "When he got home, he got a really nice bottle of scotch, something he really loved, drank that, plugged the hose into his car and calmly and quietly went to sleep never having to face anyone," said the witness.

"How do we let them go home and make their own decisions when they have taken that choice and so many other things away from their victims?"

Lynch also was employed as a

counsellor at St Pauls. Headmaster Gilbert Case, who went on to serve two years as the executive director of the Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Brisbane, was said to have arranged and spoken at Lynch's funeral, telling the school Lynch had died of a heart attack.

The commission is expected to hear Mr Case also hired Knight despite being told he had a history of abusing boys. Knight had already been accused of improper conduct with students at another Brisbane school and a school in South Australia.

## Refusal on oath puts Gray at risk

PAIGE TAYLOR

The political career of Rudd government minister Gary Gray yesterday appeared on a knife edge as senior West Australian Labor figures declined to back him over his refusal to pledge full allegiance to the state branch dominated by his enemies.

Labor's national executive committee is poised to rescue Mr Gray, meeting today to consider exempting him from having to support the platforms of the WA branch, where his rapport with business has caused ructions.

Some insiders have described moves within Labor to oust the former resources minister from his seat of Brand as punishment for his pragmatic approach to contentious issues such as foreign workers and floating LNG.

The conflict escalated on Monday when Mr Gray revealed he had refused to sign the entire candidate's pledge of allegiance that binds candidates to the rules and platforms of the ALP, and decisions of its national conference, state conference and state executive. He blacked out some sections before submitting the form, telling *The West Australian* newspaper: he had "never given in to bullies, and I will not now".

Yesterday, state Labor leader Mark McGowan said he had been advised the pledge had not changed in 20 years and he had no problem with it. "If I've been signing the same document for the last 20 years as an MP, I'm happy to continue to abide by the rules, the values, and the ideas of the party," he said.

Mr McGowan refused to say whether Mr Gray should be pre-selected for his seat when the party meets on November 13-14.

Labor transport spokeswoman Rita Saffioti also said she would sign the pledge. "I'm not sure exactly what Gary is referring to, but I'm committed to the Labor Party," she said.

ALP national secretary George Wright told *The Australian* last night he would recommend to the national executive committee today that Mr Gray's nomination be accepted as is. He also recommends changing the pledge so it no longer requires federal candidates to support state platforms. This would free Mr Gray from his factional enemies in the west.

A push by the dominant Left faction in WA to unseat Mr Gray this week prompted a warning from federal MP Alannah MacTiernan that factional balance must not decide candidates for next year's federal election.

## Medicare's \$50m bonus from GP crackdown

SEAN PARNELL

HEALTH EDITOR

A landmark investigation of so-called "patient churn" in corporate medical clinics has resulted in Medicare saving \$50 million more than the federal government anticipated.

The Department of Human Services used sophisticated data-matching to identify 60 clinics, mostly in urban areas and offering several specialties, where four or more doctors were servicing a large number of patients.

While doctors normally raise suspicion only if they breach the 80-20 rule, where doctors cannot conduct 80 or more services on 20 or more days over a 12-month period, this investigation focused on clinics with a number of doctors going close to the threshold.

*The Australian* has previously revealed more than 200 doctors were interviewed as part of the investigation, with at least 16 required to justify their charging to the Professional Services Review.

With the three-year investigation now concluded, the department has detailed, for the first time, how doctors were required to repay \$540,000 claimed through "inappropriate practice" and clinics were forced to scale back their service levels.

"Up to \$71.48m in savings were achieved over 2012-15, exceeding the expected target of \$20.7m," the department reported.

"This was mainly due to changes in billing behaviour by practitioners who were interviewed under the department's Practitioner Review Program, practitioners who were peers in

the same practice as those interviewed, or practitioners who had received a targeted letter about their servicing levels."

The department last year recovered \$63.9m in incorrect Medicare payments — only \$10.7m was recovered the year before — of which 83 per cent related to a chronic disease dental scheme that ceased in 2012.

Changes in the primary healthcare market — including Labor's GP Superclinics — have seen more doctors and medical services co-located, prompting Medicare to warn that if referrals were kept in-house, doctors might "not act as an agent of their patient, but of a corporation whose main concern is profits".

Former PSR director Tony Webber has previously raised concerns these clinics might encourage doctors to service as close to the 80/20 rule as possible, putting profits before the welfare of practitioners and patients.

The findings will inform a new approach to compliance, where a review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule is set to impose tougher guidelines on certain rebates and allow data-matching to identify doctors servicing patients in a different manner to their peers.

Documents obtained under Freedom of Information laws show Department of Health secretary Martin Bowles told the review taskforce Medicare wanted to proactively identify areas where there was high variability in the use and cost of services.

The review discussion paper also raised a question of whether MBS items collected by the Medicare system should include extra data on patient outcomes.

## Another eruption grounds Bali flights

Holiday-makers heading for Bali will be hoping a shift in the wind will allow airlines to resume flights after an erupting volcano caused Virgin Australia and Jetstar to cancel flights.

Ash from Mount Rinjani, on Lombok island, was being blown yesterday west-southwest over Denpasar airport and prompted airlines to cancel flights to avoid damage to aircraft.

Thousands of travellers were stranded in Bali in July following the eruption of Mount Raung, about 150km from Denpasar.

Mount Rinjani erupted in 1994 and caused disruptions for some time but the head of the Bureau of Meteorology's national operations centre, Andrew Tupper, said it was as much about the winds as the volcano. "Even if it just kept

erupting at this level, that doesn't mean the wind is always going to be taking it towards Denpasar, particularly as we get towards the monsoon," Mr Tupper said.

"But at the moment there's a really clear ash plume over Bali ... going close to or just north of Denpasar airport."

He said the quantity of ash was enough to be obvious on satellite and airlines had to factor it into flight planning.

Virgin cancelled 10 flights, while Jetstar cancelled three flights from Bali and three to the island resort.

Both airlines advised passengers not to travel to airports and to monitor their flight status through channels such as SMS, emails, websites or smartphones.

STEVE CREEDY

## Dance graduate ready for great leap forward



BRITTA CAMPION

Indigenous dancer Nadia Martich, preparing for NAISDA's end-of-year performance in Sydney, is then bound for Perth

SIMONE FOX KOOB

Many dance and drama students can't wait to land their first paying gig after they finish study, but dancer Nadia Martich has decided to go back to school.

In the lead up to her graduation from NAISDA indigenous dance college, 21-year-old Martich has won a coveted place to study dance at one of the nation's top arts schools, the Western Australian Academy of Perform-

ing Arts. She is only the third National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association graduate in four decades to be accepted into the Perth academy.

"After a few years at NAISDA I decided I wanted to have a professional career in dance but I also had a realisation that I needed more training," she said yesterday. "I spoke to a lot of my teachers and everyone really recommended WAAPA so I could be at a good professional level to compete for positions."

The NAISDA college, on the NSW central coast, will graduate five dancers this year, among them Jordan O'Davis, who will spend the next few months touring Australia as a dancer with *Hugh Jackman: Broadway to Oz*.

Martich said NAISDA graduates enjoyed success because of the high level of training at the dance college, which next year celebrates its 40th anniversary.

"The training here sets people up," she said. "Some people are really lucky, they can finish and

go straight into professional dance. For me, it's given me a really good foundation of dance and inspired me to work. I think I've matured enough as a person and I'm a lot more sure of my identity."

Before she leaves, Martich will perform in NAISDA's end-of-year show *Kamu* at Carriageworks in Sydney on November 26. It will be directed by Frances Rings, another NAISDA graduate who went on to dance with Bangarra for 12 years before

becoming a celebrated choreographer.

Martich feels that if she had auditioned for WAAPA straight from school, she would have stood no chance of getting in.

"You know that saying — everything happens for a reason?" she said.

"If my family didn't move to Mungindi and I didn't go to boarding school, I wouldn't have had a dance teacher who knew about NAISDA. So I'm really happy. It's so exciting."

## Troubled labour firm faces questions over close links to unionists

ELIZABETH COLMAN  
KYLAR LOUSSIKIAN

Union-linked training and labour firm Ashley Services Group will be examined over its dealings with the National Union of Workers' NSW branch.

Ashley Services founder and a senior executive have been called to give evidence at trade union royal commission hearings starting today.

Founder Ross Shrimpton and Paul Rixon, chief executive of the

company's labour hire division, will be questioned during hearings into the union over the next three days.

Ashley Services, which has repeatedly missed earnings guidelines, resulting in a share price slump, and faces a possible class action on behalf of aggrieved investors, has emerged as having multiple connections to union figures since the royal commission was launched last year.

Former Labor leader Simon Crean, a one-time general secretary of the Federated Storemen

and Packers Union, a precursor to the NUW, who joined the board of Ashley Services after its float last year, walked away from the company last month, as did chairman Peter Turner.

As foreshadowed in *The Week-end Australian*, the NSW branch of the right-wing NUW is in upheaval ahead of the inquiry's last scheduled block of public hearings before it reports to the government next month.

NSW secretary Derrick Belan, in the post since 2001 after succeeding his father Frank, abruptly

quit last month, to be replaced by his deputy, Wayne Meaney.

*The Australian* has learned Ashley Services entered into a greenfields enterprise bargaining agreement with the NUW, through its main subsidiary, Action Workforce labour hire, in 2012, co-signed by Mr Rixon and former NUW secretary Charlie Donnelly.

The deal directs all workers covered by the deal to invest in the \$4.5 billion industry super fund LUCRF Super.

Mr Donnelly was named in

commissioner Dyson Heydon's interim report as being responsible for setting up IR21, the NUW slush fund that contributed to Bill Shorten's 2013 campaign for the Labor leadership.

Mr Donnelly resigned from the NUW and became chief executive of LUCRF last year.

Mr Heydon's report also found LUCRF Super used members' money to donate to the slush fund.

As revealed in *The Australian*, in 2013 Ashley Services bought Oneforce, the labour hire company at the centre of the deal

between the Australian Workers Union onced by Mr Shorten and Chiquita Mushrooms, which was also examined by the royal commission. Oneforce went into liquidation in the same year, leaving its directors bankrupt and still owing casual workers \$500,000 in unpaid superannuation.

In the year before it collapsed, the company made a series of payments to the AWU totalling \$82,142,50, including transfers to the AWU after the buy out.

Ashley Services declined to comment last night.

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