

'Punish the people who did this to us'



Bronwyn Mohammed (left), Trish Dolan and Debbie McFarlane all spent time in the Winlaton Youth Training Centre. Photo: Luis Asculi

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Thousands of Victorian girls were forced to undergo internal examinations at the hands of state authorities, the royal commission into child abuse will be told.

Women detained at Winlaton Youth Training Centre in the 1960s and '70s are also set to tell the Royal Commission into Institutional Re-

inations. Those were often brutal.

Suzanne Knight, who was at Winlaton from 1969 to 1973, said the girls nicknamed the doctor who did the examinations "Smiley", because he smirked throughout the procedure.

"Oh, it was terrible," she said. "It's like a smear test but it's worse when you're a virgin, because you're not a virgin when you leave."

About 200 former Winlaton

almost pulling it out of my socket.

"He was nothing more than a butcher and seemed to enjoy every minute of it." When she got back to Winlaton, her pants were covered in blood. She was a virgin.

Debbie McFarlane and Bronwyn Mohammed said one doctor sometimes brutally assaulted girls during the internal examinations.

Ms McFarlane believes assaults

It's understood that Winlaton management undertook significant reforms in the mid-'70s that reduced the rate of internal examinations, but a report in *The Age* in 1979 showed they were still conducted then. The Doctors Reform Society raised fears Winlaton girls were being subjected to "unnecessary genital examinations", while a lawyer said: "I believe the procedure is being widely used as

file, she says, shows staff believed she was a lesbian.

Many of the ex-wards have obtained their records through freedom-of-information laws, but none Fairfax spoke to had managed to get their medical records. All spoke of their suspicions drugs were trialled on Winlaton girls.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services