**Consultation response**

**Why is it important?**

The Haemophilia Society has serious concerns about the proposals contained in the consultation and how they will affect people in England. It therefore wants to respond to the consultation with a strong, unified message, that the current proposals for the reformed scheme are unacceptable and require urgent revision.

**How to respond**

*Online consultation questionnaire*

There is an online form that members may wish to fill out. This can be accessed here: <https://consultations.dh.gov.uk/blood-team/infected-blood>

*Writing directly to the Blood Policy Team*

Alternatively, we have drafted the suggested text below which members may wish to send directly to the policy team, via the email or postal addresses that are included below. Please feel free to tailor this to suit you. We would also encourage you to share your own views on the consultation and to include how the proposals will affect you personally.

**Suggested response**

*To Whom It May Concern,*

*I am writing to you regarding the Department of Health’s Infected blood: reform of financial and other support consultation.*

*As a member of The Haemophilia Society and of the affected community, I want to express my deep dissatisfaction with the proposals contained in the consultation. I believe that, far from delivering the vital reforms needed by those affected, the majority of people who currently receive support will be financially worse off under the new scheme.*

*Despite the announcement of additional funding of £125 million, the proposal to remove discretionary payments such as winter fuel allowance, child supplements and low income top ups mean that many people will lose out, potentially by thousands of pounds a year.*

*The Haemophilia Society has serious concerns on other aspects of the proposals, including:*

* *The potential impact on financial certainty for those affected, through the introduction of individual assessments*
* *The removal of Consumer Price Index linking to annual benefits*
* *The lack of support within the proposals for partners, carers and dependents of those infected*
* *That a considerable percentage of the available budget for financial support has been allocated for enhanced access to hep C treatment, when NHS England will be required to provide treatment to everyone with early stage hep C (where appropriate) from February 2016*

*These concerns are compounded by the fact that similar proposals in Scotland offer more generous payments to its affected community. There is a risk that, if both sets of proposals are accepted (as they currently stand) that affected people in England will receive much lower incomes that those in Scotland.*

*[Insert any details you would like to share on how the proposals would affect you.]*

*It is imperative that the full impact of these reforms is understood before any changes to the scheme are finalised, to prevent the most disadvantaged people losing out on the support they rely on. Therefore, The Haemophilia Society and its members believe that the consultation should be withdrawn and a further period of consultation with key interested partners (including The Haemophilia Society) should be undertaken, before any further proposals for reform are made.*

*Yours faithfully,*

|  |
| --- |
| **Consultation details**The *Infected blood: reform of financial and other support* consultation is available on the Department of Health’s website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/infected-blood-reform-of-financial-and-other-support> **Contact details****Email:** infectedbloodreform@dh.gsi.gov.uk**Address:** Blood Policy Team, Department of Health, Room 104, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NSThe consultation closes for responses at **15 April 2016, 11.45pm** |

**Contact us**

If you require any further information, please contact Liz Carroll, Chief Executive of the Haemophilia Society at liz@haemophilia.org.uk