

7 September 2020

Vaughan Gething
Minister for Health and Social Care
Welsh Government
5th Floor
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Gething

I write to you on the urgent issue of financial support payments for victims of the contaminated blood scandal.

You will be aware that in Wales there are gross disparities in all categories of annual support payments compared with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In practical terms, this means that every Wales Infected Blood Support Scheme claimant is missing out on thousands of pounds of much-needed support a year.

For example, in England someone with stage two hepatitis C receives £28,476 a year. In Wales, this figure is £19,172. The list of financial disparities in support between Wales and the rest of the UK is long and shocking.

As the only UK-wide charity for those affected by a genetic bleeding disorder, our members in Wales rightly expect us to challenge this unacceptable inequality of support.

People who were infected with HIV and/or hepatitis C through NHS treatment in Wales should be entitled to the same level of support as everyone else in the UK and we would argue that, in the first instance, the payment levels are uplifted to match those paid in England, backdated to April 2019. While The Haemophilia Society believes the UK Government has a moral duty to help bridge this gap, it is clear that, as a devolved matter, your Government must now step up to support victims in Wales.

This charity would also like to see the scheme extended to support bereaved parents and children as well as improved provision for bereaved partners.

For everyone affected by a genetic bleeding disorder

President: Baroness Meacher Registered charity no. 288260. Charity Registered in Scotland No SC039732.

A company registered in England and limited by Guarantee. Registered Company No. 1763614



52B Borough High Street
London SE1 1XN
Tel: 020 7939 0780
Email: info@haemophilia.org.uk
Web: haemophilia.org.uk

Those whose lives have been devastated by contaminated blood products, who are coping with loss, poor health, stress and, in many cases, poverty, are being penalised financially because they were infected in Wales. This cannot continue.

You will have seen that the Department of Health in Northern Ireland last month committed to uplifting support payments to match those in England. We urge the Welsh Government to do the same.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

C. Smith

Clive Smith
Chair of the board of trustees
The Haemophilia Society

Cc:
Mark Drakeford, First Minister of Wales
Rebecca Evans, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd

For everyone affected by a genetic bleeding disorder

President: Baroness Meacher Registered charity no. 288260. Charity Registered in Scotland No SC039732.

A company registered in England and limited by Guarantee. Registered Company No. 1763614

haemophilia.org.uk