

# The Infected Blood Inquiry weekly summary

The  
Haemophilia  
Society

## A summary of inquiry hearings: week of 10 October 2022

Eminent virologist Professor Richard Tedder would have benefitted from a whiteboard as he tried to explain highly complex scientific processes to the inquiry with only his waving arms and a wrist watch as props. Through his long-standing work at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School Prof Tedder presented an 'evolution of a disaster unfolding' as AIDS emerged in 1982. His

mentor, Dr David Dane, had instilled in him that it was essential to 'know your donor' and he was suspicious of US products made from paid-for blood donations. Prof Tedder and his colleague Professor Robin Weiss developed the first HIV test in 1984. He described the 'frightful' moment he had to break the news to Edinburgh Haemophilia Director Dr Chris Ludlam that 15

haemophiliacs had been infected with HIV through Scottish-made factor in late 1984. In collaboration with a commercial partner, Tedder and Weiss joined a global scramble to produce reliable HIV testing kits on a large scale. Prof Tedder's test was one of three approved for use by the UK's Blood Transfusion Services to screen blood donations for HIV from October 1985.

## Quotes of the week

'It was an awfully unpleasant opening to an envelope and finding this virus where we hoped it wouldn't be...it still is devastating to look back on now and think of the harm which was going to arise from this.'  
Prof Tedder on the first HIV-positive haemophiliacs infected by Scottish-made factor in 1984

'It would be nice to feel that if you came up with something which was really good, people would listen to you.'  
On the frustrations of creating a test that works but being able to find a commercial partner or government backing

'We were told this was really not any of our business and it was not going to be a problem and go away and stop rocking the boat.'  
On a meeting in early 1983 with DHSS officials about AIDS

'It must be seen only as a matter of time before British blood products and British donors become contaminated with the virus.'  
Prof Tedder in November 1984

'I have a deep sadness for the harm – unexpected and unintentional – which has occurred through allowing the virus to become loose in a population.'  
Prof Tedder's closing remarks

## Inquiry focus: What happens next at the inquiry?

With just two more weeks of oral evidence left to hear, the inquiry has unveiled its last witness timetable. Inquiry chair, Sir Brian Langstaff, said witnesses would be mostly focused on the 'future' as he wants to use their expertise to help form some of the recommendations in his final report. The hearings begin on 8 November with evidence from Brian O'Mahony, Chief Executive of the Irish Haemophilia Society, who will discuss lessons learnt from Ireland's inquiry and compensation process. Other subjects to be discussed include specialist psychological support, use of tranexamic acid and how to raise awareness about hepatitis C among GPs. The final witness on 14 November is Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, former Deputy Chief Medical Officer. We will then return to Aldwych House in mid-January 2023 to listen to final submissions from legal representatives. Once they are finished in early February we must then wait for the publication of Sir Brian's report, which is not expected until mid-2023.