

## **APPG on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood Meeting 25th May with Health Minister Jane Ellison**

### **Introduction**

Yesterday afternoon the Society joined 30 MPs and Peers for a meeting with Health Minister Jane Ellison and five Department of Health (DoH) officials. The meeting was organized by the APPG on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood in order to discuss the support arrangements for people affected by contaminated blood.

It is thanks to the whole community working together to organise events, rallies and engagement with parliament and the media that we have been able to keep this campaign high on the minister's agenda.

### **Update from the Government**

The updates provided at the meeting were that the Department has completed the review of all the consultation responses but was not able to confirm if they would be able to formally respond to the consultation before the summer recess starting in mid-July.

All changes will be implemented in time for the new system to be place for the start of the next financial year in April 2017 but all payments will be back dated to April 2016.

At the meeting it was stated that the Government's guiding principles were that the scheme must be legal, fit within the budget that has been allocated and that people with Stage 1 Hepatitis C should be entitled to annual payments. The government stated that no one should be worse off than they are currently but our understanding is that this applies to annual non-discretionary payments not discretionary support.

### **Positive Developments**

The positive news is that the Government is reconsidering some aspects of the new proposals. These are:

- Whether assessments are appropriate or required for people with stage 1 Hepatitis C
- Plans to remove index-linking of the payment amounts
- Expanding discretionary support from what was in the new proposals
- Ensuring support is available for dependents of infected people

The DoH has been in discussions with civil servants in Wales and Northern Ireland who will put proposals to their Health Ministers. The options that will be available to them will be to follow the English scheme or they can create their own as was done in Scotland.

### **Areas where we need to continue campaigning**

However there are a number of areas where we don't feel any progress has yet been made:

- Support for bereaved partners and parents

### **For all people affected by bleeding disorders**

- The overall budget allocated for support
- The schemes and organisations providing the payments
- The future of the support past 2021
- Eligibility and amounts of lump sum payments

We will continue to work with all stakeholders to reach a fair and final settlement for all people affected by contaminated blood.

### **Further Information**

More detailed minutes from the meeting will be published on the APPG website at [http://www.haemophilia.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/influencing\\_advocacy/all\\_party\\_parliamentary\\_group](http://www.haemophilia.org.uk/what_we_do/influencing_advocacy/all_party_parliamentary_group)

Please contact Jeff Courtney at the Haemophilia Society on 0207 939 0780 or [jeff@haemophilia.org.uk](mailto:jeff@haemophilia.org.uk)

### **For all people affected by bleeding disorders**

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