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Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP  
and Sir Peter Bottomley MP  
The APPG on Haemophilia and  
Contaminated Blood  
House of Commons, London  
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14<sup>th</sup> June 2023

*Dear Diana and Peter,*

I am writing to thank you for taking the time to meet me on 6th June. I was grateful for your time and the opportunity to run through the way we are working across Government to reflect on Sir Brian Langstaff's Second Interim Report (which followed Sir Robert Francis' Study). I offered to follow up in writing and in doing so am also replying on behalf of the Prime Minister to your correspondence of 10th May.

I would first like to reiterate that the Government has accepted that there is a moral case for compensation. The infected blood scandal should never have happened and we understand that time is of the essence.

The Government is making progress in its response to Sir Brian's report. As the Inquiry Sponsor Minister, I chair meetings with Ministers from relevant departments (including but not limited to HMT, DHSC and MoJ) on a fortnightly basis to drive forward the work on the Government's response to the Infected Blood Inquiry. Officials have regular meetings across departments to progress work between the meetings of the Small Ministerial Group (SMG).

I recognise that the involvement of DHSC in the Government response may be a concern. However, this is a highly complex policy area and DHSC holds the policy and analytical expertise on health and the existing knowledge required to inform this work. Experience is valuable, and we must utilise previous experience and existing expertise to meet our aim to respond to Sir Brian's Report as soon as possible.

As Chairman, I seek to drive forward the Government's work. While SMGs are not empowered to determine final government policy they provide a useful forum to corral departmental work and to seek cross-Whitehall agreement. The interdepartmental meetings are intended to utilise departmental expertise to maximise the pace at which Government can respond to Sir Brian's report.

There are complexities in Sir Brian's recommendations which we need to work through before determining our response.

We are mindful of the importance of close liaison with the Devolved Governments. Officials have been working together for some time to consider the implications of both Sir Robert and Sir Brian's reports, including on the practical implications of how compensation could be paid out to individuals in different parts of the UK. I met Health Ministers from the Scottish and Welsh Government and the Department of Health Permanent Secretary from the Northern Ireland Civil Service on Monday 12th June to discuss Sir Brian's report and the Government's response. It was a helpful meeting and there was a common determination to take forward this work.

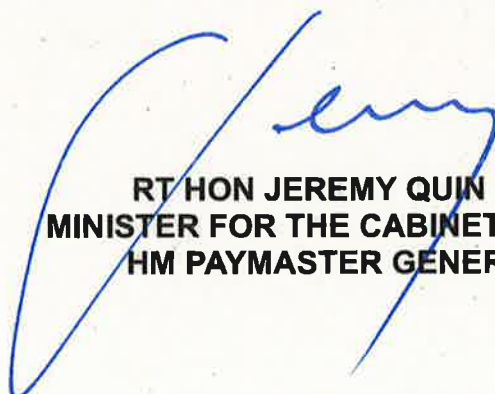
The UK Government's position that there is a moral case for compensation to be paid was welcomed and Ministers and the NI Permanent Secretary look forward to working together in considering the recommendations in the Infected Blood Inquiry's second interim report, including in respect of how compensation may be paid out to individuals in different parts of the UK to enable a response as soon as possible after the Inquiry concludes. It was noted that this does not preclude earlier announcements as work progresses. A further meeting will take place in the coming weeks to continue these discussions.

Meanwhile, the Infected Blood Support Schemes continue to provide financial support, including lump sums on registration, annual and discretionary payments. All beneficiaries on the schemes - both infected individuals and bereaved partners - received an interim payment of £100,000, following the UK Government's acceptance of the Inquiry's recommendation in its first interim report, published in July 2022.

There is very significant work to be done but this is underway and I appreciate the importance of updating the House when this is appropriate.

I welcome your continued support for the victims of infected blood and look forward to the debate on the floor of the House on this subject and continued engagement with the Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood APPG as we progress work on the Government's response.

**Yours sincerely,**



**RT HON JEREMY QUIN MP  
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE  
HM PAYMASTER GENERAL**