



30 January 2019

Statement from The Haemophilia Society

Today Sir Brian Langstaff, chairman of the Infected Blood Inquiry has set out his preliminary decisions (“determinations”) for issuing The Haemophilia Society with imminent deadlines for the submission of documents.

The Haemophilia Society has campaigned for the truth about the contaminated blood scandal to be exposed for more than 30 years.

We believe the Infected Blood Inquiry can and must deliver that truth.

However, The Society regrettably finds itself at an impasse with Sir Brian and the Infected Blood Inquiry.

The Haemophilia Society has put its faith in the advice of Malcomson Law, which has unrivalled experience of bleeding disorders litigation. Malcomson Law is currently considering Sir Brian’s determination as a matter of urgency.

Malcomson Law advised The Society that it had a series of legal concerns which required clarification from the Inquiry. A number of these concerns have centred on protecting our members’ highly confidential personal information. The Society also raised wider concerns about the resourcing of the Inquiry with Cabinet Office Minister, David Lidington last week and await his response.

The Society has been entrusted with personal and sensitive information by its members over the course of our 60-year history. We have a duty to protect those individuals, some of whom have concealed their medical condition even from other family members.

We understand that delays resulting from seeking those assurances has led to frustration from our members who are, rightly, anxious to see progress being made. We share that frustration.

Sir Brian is clear that his aim is not to apportion blame, but to ensure the Inquiry has access to all the documentation it needs. It has always been our intention to fully comply with our legal obligations to the Inquiry and today we reiterate that commitment.

With regard to legal privilege, The Society is yet to make a final decision. The review of our papers is well underway and once this has been completed we will be in a position to make a final determination on the matter.

In his determination Sir Brian refers to a meeting on 16 November 2018. To clarify, this was a meeting convened with the Inquiry team to discuss how The Society had been treated at the preliminary hearings, which we felt was discourteous to our members, and to raise our

concerns on a specific issue of how much time The Society was allocated to speak at those hearings.

The Society can reassure our members and the wider haemophilia community that we will play our full part in ensuring justice is delivered for the victims of the contaminated blood scandal.

Ends

For everyone affected by a genetic bleeding disorder

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