



Diana Johnson MP
Co-Chair, APPG on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Rt. Hon David Cameron MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Whitehall
SW1A 2AA

28th September 2015,

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th September. I am pleased to hear that the infected blood tragedy continues to receive your attention. I am also pleased that you are prioritising a move to a “reformed financial scheme”.

However, I would like to press you on what is meant by such reform. While reforms to the financial support available is very much needed, it is not sufficient to provide a final settlement that will bring closure to all those affected. Can you confirm whether the emphasis on the “reformed financial scheme” means that the Government is not currently considering additional lump-sum payments for those affected?

Secondly, I want to press you on the central point from my previous letter which you have not addressed, the decision that the costs of any additional support must come from within the Department of Health’s core budget. Many members of the APPG, including myself, have pointed out that this is at odds with compensation for previous tragedies, such as Equitable Life, the costs of which have been met by the Treasury.

This is a crucial point because, regardless of the reforms introduced, the financial support system for those affected cannot provide adequate support without significant additional funds. While there are numerous and significant issues with the administration of the current support arrangements, there is also a fundamental problem that the level of support is not sufficient. The APPG report published last year highlighted two basic problems that need to be addressed:

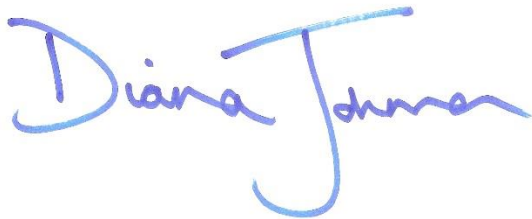
1. The current level of support is not sufficient to ensure that all those in receipt of support are above the poverty threshold.
2. The discretionary nature of much of the support is highly demeaning. Even applications for basic support such as white goods demand numerous forms requesting personal information which left recipients of support feeling like they were “begging”. The new system cannot rely on discretionary support in the way the current system does.

It is quite clear that these two problems cannot be addressed without significant extra funds. Given the current financial climate with the NHS it is hard to see how this can be met from within the Department of Health's core budget. As you will recall, in the letter Sir Peter Bottomley MP and I wrote in August, we asked whether the Treasury would consider a business case for additional financial support if one was presented by the Department of Health. I would be very grateful to a response on this point.

As you know, the APPG is due to meet the Parliamentary under-Secretary for Public Health, Jane Ellison MP shortly. This letter is not meant to pre-empt the meeting. The APPG is very grateful for the constructive way in which the Parliamentary under-Secretary has engaged with the APPG since her appointment. We look forward to working with her on the details of reforms, and on the forthcoming consultation. However the balance of spending between Government Departments, and exceptional spending made by the Treasury, are outside of the Minister's remit, which is why I am raising these issues with you directly.

I am copying this letter to the Minister and to members of the APPG and I would appreciate a response that I can share with fellow parliamentarians and the affected community.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diana Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diana Johnson MP
Co-chair APPG on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood

cc. Jane Ellison MP, Parliamentary under-Secretary, Department of Health
Members of the APPG on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood