

**"Re: Observer re self-sufficiency report"**

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Katie Robinson

15/09/2006 16:55

Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C

To: Zubeda

cc:

bcc:

Subject: Re: Observer re

self-sufficiency report



highlight - Observer blood.doc

That info is just what I needed Zubeda. You've been really helpful - thank you.

I've produced the attached for our weekend media highlights (a note that goes to Ministers and press office about what stories we anticipate over the weekend.) It includes the lines I've sent to the Observer.

Katie

Katie Robinson

Press Officer - Health Minister Caroline Flint

Department of Health Media Centre

Telephone GRO-C

Fax GRO-C

Zubeda Seedat

Zubeda Seedat
15/09/2006 16:29

To:
Robinson/COMMS/DOH/GB@GRO-C
cc:
Connon/PD-PMD/DOH/GB@GRO-C Linda
Page/SSU/DOH/GB@GRO-C
Subject:
self-sufficiency report

Katie
William
Observer re

Katie,

The line of public inquiry is fine to use and addresses the last point.

In relation to the first couple of points I attach briefing we drafted at the time we published the Self Sufficiency report. Q&A at para 2 and 4/5 set out our understanding at the time.

Hope this helps. Let me know if you have any queries.

THanks

Zubeda

Zubeda Seedat
General Health Protection
GRO-C

----- Forwarded by Zubeda Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB on 15/09/2006 16:21 -----

Katie Robinson
15/09/2006 15:19

To:
Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C
cc:
bcc:
Subject:
self-sufficiency report

Zubeda
Observer re

Hi Zubeda

As discussed, the email from the Observer is below. Seems that the HS just want to stir things up again. The questions the Observer want us to address are :

- The Haemophilia Society is saying that the government withheld information from people who were HIV positive. Did they?
- And that the DoH knew the risks of NANBH but downplayed them? Did they?
- The Haemophilia Society says this re-opens the case for a public inquiry. Is that likely to be considered?

I found the following line on a public inquiry on our CHIP system and think it looks OK to use. I'll need your view on what (if anything) we say on the other stuff.

"We are aware that some people would like the Government to set up a public inquiry into this issue. We have great sympathy for those infected with Hepatitis C and HIV and have considered the call for a public inquiry very carefully. However, the Government of the day acted in good faith, relying on the technology available at that time and therefore we do not feel a public inquiry would provide any real benefit to those affected."

Thanks a lot

Katie

Katie Robinson
Press Officer - Health Minister Caroline Flint
Department of Health Media Centre

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----- Forwarded by Katie Robinson/COMMS/DOH/GB on 15/09/2006 15:08 -----

Lorna.Martin@[GRO-C]
[GRO-C]

15/09/2006 14:51

To: Robinson/COMMS/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
cc: Roberts/COMMS/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
Subject: self-sufficiency report

Katie
Brenda Irons-
media inquiry re

Hi Katie

As discussed I'm working on a piece for Sunday following information released to me from the Haemophilia Society. I'll outline a bit of background first then my specific inquiry...

BACKGROUND:

Following the publication in February of the Self-sufficiency in blood products in England and Wales: A chronology from 1973 to 1991, the Haemophilia Society lodged an FOI request asking for access to the documents referred to in the report.

They received some (I think in July). Having looked over them, the Society is claiming that information in the documents contradict some of the report's key conclusions.

In particular, the report concluded that no-one acted wrongly in light of the facts that were available to them at the time. It also stated that the prevailing opinion in the 1970s and the early 80s was that NANBH (now known

as Hep C) was a mild infection and often asymptomatic.

However, they have a letter dated 15 September 1980 from D Walford, DHSS to Mr Harley (reference 99), it states that NANBH can be rapidly fatal.

The documents also show that in 1984 (reference 133, meeting of the Haemophilia reference centre directors, 10 December 1984) no clear instructions were given as to whether to inform people of their HIV status after they were discovered to be HIV positive following treatment with contaminated products. Instead, results were given only if people asked or at the discretion of doctors. According to the Haemophilia Society, the government said people were informed of the status as soon as it became known someone was HIV positive.

My questions are essentially a response to those allegations:

Basically, the Haemophilia Society is saying that the government withheld information from people who were HIV positive. Did they?

And that the DoH knew the risks of NANBH but downplayed them? Did they?

The Haemophilia Society says this re-opens the case for a public inquiry. Is that likely to be considered?

I'm very grateful to you for your help.

Lorna Martin

GRO-C

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