

Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme

Newsletter Issue 5

Welcome to issue 5 of the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme (SIBSS) Newsletter

Annual payment increase 1.7% to be paid from April 2020

The inflationary rate for payments in 2020-21 has been agreed at 1.7% and, going forward, the rate will be set at the rate of CPI each September for the following financial year. See table below for revised payment levels.

Category	Current Payment	2020-21 Payment with 1.7% increase
HCV Stage 2	£27,000	£27,459
HCV Stage 2 (Widows)	£20,250	£20,594
HCV Stage 1 – Moderately affected	£6,300	£6,407
HCV Stage 1 – Moderate (Widows)	£4,725	£4,805
HCV Stage 1 – Severely affected	£18,900	£19,221
HCV Stage 1 – Severe (Widows)	£14,175	£14,416
Coinfected	£37,000	£37,629
Coinfected (Widows)	£27,750	£28,222
HIV	£27,000	£27,459
HIV (Widows)	£20,250	£20,594

Letters/emails have been sent to all members in receipt of a regular payment. Contact SIBSS if you have not received one.

Carers Allowance

If you rely on the help of a family member see information below on Carers Allowance which is available from the benefits office. They could get £66.15 a week if they care for you at least 35 hours a week. You do not have to be related to, or live with, the person cared for. See details below:

Eligibility of person you care for:

The person you care for must already get one of these benefits:

- Personal Independence Payment - daily living component
- Disability Living Allowance - the middle or highest care rate
- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Constant Attendance Allowance at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

Your eligibility - All of the following must apply:

- you're 16 or over
- you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone
- you've been in England, Scotland or Wales for at least 2 of the last 3 years (this does not apply if you're a refugee or have humanitarian protection status)
- you normally live in England, Scotland or Wales, or you live abroad as a member of the armed forces (you might still be eligible if you're moving to or already living in an EEA country or Switzerland)
- you're not in full-time education
- you're not studying for 21 hours a week or more
- you're not subject to immigration control
- your earnings are £123 or less a week after tax, national insurance and expenses


For full details go to the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

SIBSS Respite Break– you can also apply for a respite break to assist your carer

Respite breaks are restricted to the UK and are intended to give carers a short break from their caring responsibilities, or allow a short period of recuperation following or during a particular decline in health and wellbeing. There are a number of UK agencies that support respite breaks - see link for further information -

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support/breaks-for-carers-respite-care/>





We understand people will be worried about how coronavirus and covid-19 could affect their health, so we have included some guidance to help beneficiaries better judge how to categorise themselves in relation to isolation and social distancing advice.

Those at high risk: anyone who has a liver or other transplant due to the immunosuppressant medication they will be taking. This group will be contacted next week with some advice, but are strongly encouraged to self-isolate.

Those at increased risk (but not in the high risk category):

- Anyone with hepatitis c who has not achieved a sustained viral response (SVR)
- Anyone who has achieved SVR following treatment, but has liver cirrhosis
- Anyone with hepatitis b
- Anyone who is HIV positive with a CD4 count less than 350/mm3
- Anyone with other risk factors, such as being aged over 70 years old or pregnant or who is offered the annual flu jab for any other reason

For those who are coinfectd with hepatitis c and HIV, they should focus on the HIV advice above.

Anyone in any of these categories does not need to completely self-isolate (although obviously can if they feel more comfortable doing so), but should carefully follow government and NHS Inform advice on social distancing to minimise their risk of infection.

Those not in any of these categories:

- Anyone who had HCV, but has achieved SVR and doesn't have cirrhosis
- Anyone who has HIV, but with a CD4 count >350/mm3 and an undetectable viral load

People in these categories should follow the general public health advice on minimising risk, but are not at particular risk if they contract covid-19. Advice from HCV experts is that previous treatment (such as interferon) is not known to impact on people's risk from covid-19.

SIBSS Annual Spend

Last year SIBSS spent a total of £9.3 million on beneficiary payments.

Apply to become a member of the SIBSS Advisory Group

We have an Advisory Group to ensure that the Scottish scheme takes account of beneficiaries' concerns and views on areas of operational improvement, in light of the budget available. See our website at <https://nhsnss.org/sibss> for a copy of the terms of reference. If you are interested in joining the Advisory Group and you would be happy to participate in accordance with the terms of reference, please contact the SIBSS team for further information as we are happy to accept applications from individuals who wish to help ensure the scheme follows good practice.

Did you know?

- If you do not have access to the internet, or prefer to talk directly, the SIBSS team are happy to give advice and assistance over the phone.
- If you receive a regular payment; you can request a monthly remittance advice to be sent to you.
- You need to inform us if you move address or your circumstances change.
- If you need counselling and other psychological support there is support available; contact the SIBSS team for more information.



Contact us

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