

Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme

Newsletter Issue 7

Welcome to issue 7 of the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme (SIBSS) Newsletter

Information on changes to SIBSS payments in light of the UK Government announcement of 25 March.

See link to UK Government announcement in Links section.

The expected new payments levels for SIBSS effective from April 2021 are set out below in the right-hand column. We will unfortunately not be ready to make these new payments in April as some details still need to be confirmed by the UK and Scottish Governments. However, we will increase the payments as soon as we can and backdate the increases.

	SIBSS (previously planned) 2021-22	UK Parity Payments 2021-22*
Chronic HCV Stage 1 (moderately affected)	£6,439	£19,456
Chronic HCV Stage 1 (severely affected)	£19,317	£29,224
Advanced HCV (Stage 2)	£27,596	£29,224
HIV	£27,596	£29,224
Coinfected	£37,817	£45,616
Widows/ers/partners – chronic HCV – moderately affected	£4,829	£14,184
Widows/ers/partners – chronic HCV – severely affected	£14,488	£21,510
Widows/ers/partners – advanced HCV or HIV	£20,697	£21,510
Widows/ers/partners - coinfectd	£28,363	£33,804

* Note – the UK payment levels include a winter fuel allowance for infected beneficiaries. SIBSS will confirm in due course when this part of the payment will be paid.

All changes to annual payments will be backdated to April 2019 so regular payments you received since then for any time period you were eligible will be topped up to reflect the levels paid by the English Infected Blood Support Scheme in 2019-20 and 2020-21. While backdated payments will take a little longer to process, we hope that these payments will be made by the summer. If you already receive an annual payment, you do not need to do anything to apply for the backdated money as SIBSS will arrange payment for you.

Those in the Stage 1 group who have self-assessed that hepatitis c (HCV) has no noticeable impact on their day to day life will also now be able to get an annual payment and payments backdated to April 2019. The Scottish Government hopes to be able to confirm details of the new payment levels soon and SIBSS will then provide application forms to beneficiaries in this group as soon as possible.

Please note that the payment levels set out above for the bereaved widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners of an infected beneficiary who died are for those whose spouse or partner died over 12 months ago. If your spouse or partner died within the last 12 months you will get the same amount as your spouse or partner would have been entitled to until the first 12 months have passed.

In addition, those widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners who have since remarried, entered into a new civil partnership or are living with a new partner will now be able to receive these regular annual payments as well and will also receive backdated top-up payments for period from April 2019.

Effective from April 2021, a new £10,000 lump sum payment will now be made on the death of a beneficiary to support their family with expenses, such as funeral costs. This will be available both to widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners of a beneficiary who has died or, if they did not have a partner, the deceased person's estate will be able to claim this payment. SIBSS will prepare a short application forms soon for this new payment.

In addition, we expect HIV lump sum payments to be increased for existing beneficiaries who have received less than £80,500 and we hope to be able to make the £10,000 bereavement payment also available to widows, widowers, partners or estates of those who have died since April 2017.

CPI increase in regular payments

Letters were sent out at the end of December 2020 advising members of the new annual rates for regular payment. Please note that you will receive this payment until SIBSS is ready to make the new increased payments.

The SIBSS Scheme Document has been amended as from 1st April 2021

The changes include the CPI increases so all payment levels have been increased by 0.5% to reflect the September 2020 CPI rate. The Scottish Government will prepare a further amending Scheme document to cover all the new changes as soon as is feasible.



Mental Health Survey

Thank you to all who took part in our Mental Health survey.

While grants to receive private counselling are already available to all, a dedicated psychological support service is currently only available to beneficiaries with inherited bleeding disorders and their families. Following the recent survey of SIBSS members, which highlighted an unmet demand for mental health support amongst our beneficiaries, the Scottish Government agreed to establish a new infected blood service to make help and support available to anyone affected.

The Scottish Government is working with NHS Lothian to recruit a new psychologist to support the new service and we hope to have the service available by Summer 2021. This will be available to everyone across Scotland and we will provide more information on our website once the new service is up and running.

Website Improvements

We have added a Frequently Asked Questions section to our website and we are in the process of reviewing the content and layout to make sure it meets current accessibility standards. We are also producing a video guidance to assist members with the self-assessment application process. Watch this space! SIBSS Website

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.
- One off grants are available to help with living costs, income top up or other one off needs. More information can be found by clicking on this [link](#).



Links

[SIBSS Website](#)
[Grant Information](#)
[Support Organisations](#)
[Scottish Government Website](#)
[Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

Contact us

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