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to submissions@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk, DSO Advisory 1, McAlister, Nicola, Philip Aldworth, Mark Robinson, Heaney, Lesley, Dillon, Edmond, Reilly, Gareth

The Department of Health in Northern Ireland wishes to take this opportunity to thank the Chair and the Inquiry team for its meticulous work to date.

When Robin Swann took up post as Minister of Health in Northern Ireland in January 2020, improving financial support for those infected and / or affected by contaminated blood in Northern Ireland was an immediate priority and has continued to be a high priority. Measures introduced under his leadership include reforms to bring all four financial support schemes into broader parity in terms of the financial support provided.

Supporting the work of the Inquiry has also been a priority and the Department has provided extensive documentation as well as written and oral evidence. The Department remains committed to fully supporting the Inquiry in its ongoing work and will be ready to respond to any future requests and recommendations the Inquiry may make.

At this juncture, the Department is not proposing recommendations that the Inquiry may wish to consider but will review its position in light of any further submissions made on behalf of other core participants, particularly the infected and affected.

It is hoped this approach will ensure that, so far as possible, any submissions the Department makes are of assistance to the Inquiry and reflect the guidance the Inquiry has provided in that regard.

Philip Aldworth QC

Mark Robinson QC

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