

MLP22

RESTRICTED - POLICY

Mrs Weatherseed PS/PS(H)

From: PS/Permanent Secretary

Date: 29 February 1996.

Copy: Mr Holden PS/SofS
Dr Metters DCMO
Miss Edwards CAD
Mr Guinness CA-OPU1-2
Mr Brownlee F1
Mr Dobson FPA-FPS
Dr Harding EOR3
Dr Rejman CA-OPU2
Mr Sharpe HP4
Mr Waterhouse HCD-SCS(A)
Mrs James SOLB4
Mr Pudlo CA-OPU2
Mr Young HCD-SCS(B)1

COMPENSATION FOR HAEMOPHILIACS WITH HEPATITIS C

The Permanent Secretary has seen your minute of 28 February to Mr Guinness and will be interested to see his reply.

2. He appreciates that it may be possible to devise schemes which cover only restricted groups and are thus more affordable. He does however point out that any move to pay compensation to a restricted group of Hepatitis C sufferers (eg haemophiliacs) is likely to lead to irresistible pressure to extend it to a much wider group. There is no obvious basis for distinguishing between people infected via blood products and those infected by blood transfusion, for example; and the Government was quite unable to sustain the same distinction in the case of HIV/AIDS sufferers. The unfortunate truth is that this is a very slippery slope. Our present stance is uncomfortable, but any movement from it, however slight, is likely to start something we won't be able to stop.

3. He therefore recommends extreme caution in dealing with Mr Marshall's proposal.

Ben Dyson
Room 121 RH
Ext GRO-C