

Ailsa Wight/PH6/DOH/GB

23/04/2013 16:23

To Rowena Jecock/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C Ben  
Cole/HP-SL/DOH/GB@GRO-C

cc

bcc

Subject Fw: Restricted

fyi as discussed - do share with Nick at SkF  
thanks for draft

Ailsa Wight  
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----- Forwarded by Ailsa Wight/PH6/DOH/GB on 23/04/2013 16:23 -----

Ailsa  
Wight/PH6/DOH/GB

23/04/2013 16:20

To GRO-A

cc

Subject Fw: Restricted

Dear Mr GRO-A

Thank you for your e-mail of 17 April 2013, regarding the backdating of your Skipton Fund stage 2 payments. The Department of Health and the Skipton Fund made a number of efforts, over a period of time in 2011, to trace the potential beneficiaries of these payments, taking care not to risk the unauthorised disclosure to others of an individual's hepatitis C status. The payments were initially publicised through press releases, a number of government websites, third sector organisations and campaign groups such as the Hepatitis C Trust, as well as the Department's communications with GPs and the NHS. This was then followed with a ring-round of people who had already received Skipton Fund stage 2 payments. Later in 2011, the Department asked the British Association for the Study of the Liver, the British Viral Hepatitis Group, the British Society for Gastroenterology and the British Infection Association to send messages to their members asking them to tell any of their patients who might qualify, about the new payments.

I am sorry that for whatever reason contact was not made with you at the time, and that is why it is welcome that the Skipton Fund continues to try to identify those entitled to these payments, and I am pleased that the Fund has now been able to

contact you. With regard to your request for backdating, this is not automatic but the Skipton Fund is responsible for assessing such requests as they arise, and making a decision about whether to backdate. We have spoken with the Fund and they will let you know of their decision shortly.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Ailsa Wight

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Ben Cole/HP-SL/DOH/GB

From: GRO-A

Sent: 17/04/2013 09:23 CET

To: Ailsa Wight

Subject: Restricted

GRO-A

Dear Dr Wight

I have a rare blood condition called x-linked agammaglobulinaemia. Through NHS treatment for this condition I was infected with the hepatitis C virus in the late 1980s. This led to cirrhosis of the liver which necessitated a liver transplant in 2002.

In October 2004 I received a stage 1 Skipton Fund (SF) payment of £20K and the stage 2 SF payment of £25K was paid to me in January



2005.

Last Friday I received a phone call from the SF to let me know that I was entitled to a further lump sum payment of £25K. I later discovered through the SF website that I was also entitled to a flat rate regular payment of £14K per annum and that these payments have been available since 2011. I phoned the SF on Monday (15th Apr 2013) to confirm the availability of this regular payment and to enquire about backdating to 2011. I spoke to Nick Fish (NF), Scheme Administrator, who told me that he was unable to backdate the payment and that I would need to apply to the Department of Health (DH) for any backdating.

Prior to receiving the phone call from the SF last Friday, I had no awareness of the 2011 announcement regarding further payments to people in my situation as this received little or no press coverage. NF told me he could not backdate the payment as over 2 years had lapsed since the original announcement. He told me that a decision had been taken not to write to prospective beneficiaries so as to avoid potential confidentiality breaches. Apparently someone from the DH tried phoning me 2 years ago without success.

I have lived at my current address for over 10 years. My landline number has remained the same since 1997 and my mobile phone number has not changed since 1999. I therefore find it surprising that no one was able to contact me in 2011 to let me know about these payments. I find it even more surprising that no one wrote to me. A simple letter from the Department of Health (DH) asking me to make contact would not have risked a breach of confidentiality. Alternatively the DH, via the SF, could have made contact thorough my consultant at Kings College Hospital.

As a result of this lackadaisical approach by both the DH and the SF I now risk forfeiting £25k worth of regular payment and the interest this would have generated. I have also lost interest on the principal top up payment of £25K.

I would be grateful if you would consider my claim for backdating of the regular payment. If you are not willing to authorise this, please explain why. I would also be grateful if you would let me know how I appeal against any unfavourable decision made by you.

I am happy for you to communicate with me by letter or secure email ( GRO-A ) but I would prefer it if you don't phone as I want to ensure a proper audit trail of our communication on this

matter.

Yours sincerely

GRO-A

Skipton Fund registration number 4937

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