

Tragedy family welcomes help for blood victims

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THE FAMILY of a haemophiliac who died after contracting hepatitis C from contaminated blood has welcomed the announcement of a campaign to help them get compensation from the government.

William Murphy died four months ago from a liver tumour which developed as a result of the hepatitis C virus.

Mr Murphy, 59, was one of 40 men with haemophilia who have died from the virus in the past 18 months.

But Mr Murphy's widow and children and 40 other families have been ignored.

Now the Haemophilia Society, which led the campaign for HIV-infected victims, has announced it will be lobbying the government on the issue.

Chairman of the Haemophilia Society, the Reverend Prebendary Alan Tanner, said: "Over 3,000 people with haemophilia have been infected with this potentially life-threatening virus through treatment with clotting factor concentrates before 1986."

By Claire Stocks
Daily Post Staff

He said victims were not told of the risk of hepatitis and were infected in exactly the same way as more than 1,200 people with haemophilia contracted the Aids virus.

Until 1985 donated blood was not screened for HIV or hepatitis. Although HIV-affected haemophiliacs won financial redress from the government in a £42m out-of-court settlement, the Department of Health has never recognised the plight of hepatitis C haemophiliacs.

Mr Murphy's case is being highlighted as a perfect example of the inconsistency of the government's position - his two haemophiliac brothers died from HIV-related illnesses contracted from contaminated blood and their families were catered for in the settlement.