

To: Ms Murie
Diary Clerk (SofS)

From: Christine Corrigan HSD1

Date: 16 June 1997

Copies: Mr Fahy PS/MS(PH)
Ms McEvoy PS/MS(L)
Mr Doran HSD1
Ms Gwynn PC1 - NHSPB
Ms Towner HSD1
Mr Young HCD-SCS(B)1
Ms Nicholls HP4B
Mr Chan (Parly) - see para 4

Invitation to SofS to meet the Haemophilia Society

1. I am very sorry for the lengthy delay in returning these to you, but there has been some confusion (mainly mine) about handling and indeed the appropriate line to take on the hepatitis C issue in the light of a recent Ministerial meeting on a linked issue.
2. I attach a brief note which gives the background to the Haemophilia Society's request for a meeting to discuss financial compensation for those haemophiliacs infected with hepatitis C. You will see from that, that one of the reasons the Society's request for a special payment scheme was rejected by the previous administration was the view that this would inevitably lead to a general NHS no-fault compensation scheme. MS(PH) has in fact been discussing a similar claim for financial recompense from the group infected with CJD through treatment using pituitary derived human growth hormone. We were anxious not to give advice in this instance which was inconsistent with MS(PH)'s decision in that case.
3. I understand, however, that she has asked for one or two points to be looked into further. In view of that development, and of the letters from the former Shadow Health Minister, which the Haemophilia Society enclosed and which give a very clear undertaking to review the situation, we would strongly recommend that SofS should agree to review the issue. We would also recommend that the Haemophilia Society be invited to make their representations direct to whichever Minister takes the lead on this (given the link with other such claims through the wider issue of no-fault compensation, it might be best for MS(PH) to take this on). The letter to Rev. Tanner has been drafted accordingly.
4. Please note that there are also currently two PQs (168 and 385) asking for the Government's proposals in respect of haemophiliacs infected with hepatitis C and a

16/06/97

further PQ asking about plans with respect to those patients infected through blood transfusion (PQ 295). The responses have been drafted on the basis that SofS will be content to agree to a review of the compensation issue.

5. I also attach a background note on the Factor VIII issue for information. On the additional point about a "national commissioning framework for certain diseases" we understand that there has not yet been detailed discussion as to what this might entail and how it might fit into Ministers' more long-term plans regarding the future of purchasing within the NHS. I have accordingly drafted something rather broad which I hope covers the point sufficiently for the moment.

Christine Corrigan
HSD 1
Room 315, EH
Ext: Ext **GRO-C**