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Mr **GRO-A**

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10th December 1998

Dear Mr **GRO-A**

Thank you for your further letter of 3 December following my reply to you of 30 November about a special payment scheme for people infected with hepatitis C through NHS treatment.

I am very sorry to have to tell you that you have misunderstood my letter. When Frank Dobson announced the Government's decision on the 28 July, it was to inform people that there was not going to be a special payment scheme for people infected with hepatitis C.

The position is that when negligence has not been established, compensation is not payable. Regrettably, some people were infected with hepatitis C through NHS treatment, but this was not through negligence. Patients received the best treatment available based on the knowledge which existed at the time.

I recognise that you have been deeply disappointed by our response on this issue. I hope, however, that you will accept that the most careful consideration was given to all the points raised before Ministers reached their decision. I am sorry I cannot send you a more positive reply.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Debbie Barnes

