

Edwina Hart MBE OStJ AM

Y Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Our ref: MB/EH/0716/10

Your ref:



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Dear Ann

Thank you for your letter of the 13 October 2010 regarding the review of the support provided to those affected with HIV and/or hepatitis C via NHS-supplied contaminated blood and blood products.

From discussions between my officials and yours, I understand that the first stage of the review will be to establish an Expert Group to gain clinical advice and expertise on the clinical course of hepatitis C and HIV. The Expert group will then recommend if a review of the current criteria and/or compensation levels for those affected by contaminated blood and blood products is required.

As the first stage of the review will involve mainly clinical issues, I am content for my officials to maintain a watching brief over the work of the Expert Group. However, once any recommendations have been made and if further work is to be taken forward, I would like my officials to be fully involved. I would also like full details of the financial implications from any potential alterations that may be considered.

Although I recognise that the review is at an early stage, I would like to express my preference for the continuation of a UK-wide fund for hepatitis C, in place of the establishment of separate systems.

I have copied this letter to Michael McGimpsey MLA and Nicola Sturgeon MSP for their information.

GRO-C: Edwina Hart