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"MFT and Hep C scheme"

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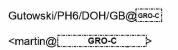
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"Peter Ste	vens"
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03/11/2003	3 17:55



To: Richard

cc: "Martin Harvey"

bcc:

Subject: MFT and Hep C

Richard

I trust that by now you have had Martin's letter, from which you will know that we would like to get on with the scheme but are somewhat stymied by the continuing uncertainty on various points.

scheme

Knowing that this is not my role at all, might I nevertheless make a couple of suggestions that might deal with some of the unsettled or contentious points that could help to reduce the flak that will fly around John Reid's Questions?

- payments to bereaved. This is, I think, more of an issue for the mono-infected (including the transfusion group) than it need be for the co-infected, all of whom have had ex gratia and settlement payments post- or prebereavement. I do not know how many transfusion bereavements there have been, but excluding the co-infected group takes about 850 families out of the settlement. Could not some "token" payment say £5,000 then be afforded?
- virus clearance. Mark Winter has pointed out that excluding any payment for virus clearance, while giving a £25K payment to those who have moved to some form of liver damage, creates a huge dis-incentive to having treatment (and the treatment is enough of a disincentive itself). Surely there should be a payment £10K? to anybody who clears the virus after 29 August following treatment? I accept that retro-active payment to those who have cleared already, whether or not through treatment, is, in the real world, not such a high priority for a "no liability" scheme.

- Hep B. This is a new point, again from Mark. He has 2 or 3 haemophiliac patients who contracted Hep B through the same route. It would seem logical to include them. Since numbers are bound to be very low, can they be included through the administrative process without bgin publicly announced?
- transfusion cases. I think we still need, as I said in my previous Email, a meeting with you (and some medics, including Mark if possible) but without any campaigners to discuss the processes for this lot, who seem to present much more complex administrative problems.

I must point out that the first two of these points are not in line with my Trustees' wishes, but appear to Martin and me to be possible practical compromises.

Another point made by the Trustees was that the whole scheme should be based on conditions applying on 29/8, but I really cannot see that being workable. There has to be the possibility of people who were virus-free coming back if the virus re-appears (if my suggestion above it taken, they would only be eligible for a balancing payment, not the whole £20K), and for people to get the £25K if at any time in the future they reach the illness trigger.

Of course, any extension beyond a one-shot scheme would push up the costs beyond our £160K estimate, but over a much more extended period thatn the 6-months we envisaged for the one-shot scheme.

I am sure our Trustees will support our administration of a scheme even if there are aspects of it they do not like the problem at the moment is that the lack of final details gives them the opportunity to make conditions. The only condition of the scheme from which we cannot walk away is that "our guys" - the living co-infected - get the same deal as the mono-infected.

We are having a Trustees' Awayday on 1 December, mainly to give full consideration to the long-term review report (which we will be sending to you very shortly after that). Is there any prospect that we can present to the Trustees on that day a final, fully worked-out scheme?

Best regards

Peter Stevens

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