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"Hep C: Inquiry and Newsnight item"

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18/04/2007 10:18

To: Jonathan Stopes-Roe/HP-SL/DOH/GB@GRO-C
cc
bcc
Subject: Hep C: Inquiry and Newsnight item

As discussed.

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----- Forwarded by Lee Robertson/PH6/DOH/GB on 18/04/2007 10:18 -----

William Cannon
18/04/2007 07:36

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Subject: Hep C: Inquiry

and Newsnight item



RESTRICTED - Policy

Bradley,

Having seen last night's Newsnight, and heard fairly extensive coverage on this morning's BBC radio news, I don't think anything new was aired. I thought the coverage very predictably biased but as DH declined to take part we can't really complain.

There were references to a number of specific documents and we may need to provide briefing on those. They also interviewed or quoted some of the doctors and experts who were around at the time and several haemophiliacs including Ms [GRO-A]. Their comments were very critical of Government and DH handling of this issues.

I am due to leave the office at 08:00 for a meeting in Cardiff and will not be back in the office today. Linda Page is due in this morning and will be able to assist with any briefing which may be required. Linda's contact numbers are [GRO-C] or [GRO-C] (mobile which is better). I will be on my mobile [GRO-C] and if necessary will cancel my trip to Wales. However the train leaves Paddington at 09:15 so you would have to get hold of me before then if you would like me to be around, in case of any further media interest. It would be helpful if you could supply Linda with transcripts as soon as they are available.

The coverage of the Archer inquiry was extensive and a lot was made of the Government's refusal to hold an official inquiry. Surprisingly, it was said that the Government has not yet decided whether or not to cooperate with the inquiry. Our line is that we are arranging to meet with the inquiry team (which may include Lords Archer and Turnberg) but that is to discuss how we can assist with their processes but not to become involved with the actual inquiry. That remains our position and I am waiting for Mr Vijay Mehan (the inquiry secretary) to come back to me with dates for the meeting.

Happy to discuss before 09:15 if you (or any copyees) wish although I will be on the tube between 8-9.

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