

Witness Name: Katherine Victoria Burt

Statement No: WITN6392001

Exhibits: WITN6392002 - WITN6392267

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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**WITN6392237**

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## **Report on Hardship Fund**

The Hardship fund has been in existence, to the best of my knowledge, for at least 12 years and became the Alan Tanner Hardship Fund in 1997 in recognition of his work as chairman of the Society for many years. I only have records going back to the beginning of 1998. At that time it had an annual budget of £10,000. Its current budget is £11,000. It meets every two months and its budget per meeting is £1,833. Generally there is a maximum individual grant of £500. This has not changed since 1998.

The Hardship Fund assists people affected by haemophilia with the cost of essential items (preferably directly related to haemophilia) which they cannot afford themselves. Applicants must be on a low income though they do not have to be on income support levels. We only accept one application per family per year. The Grant Committee consists of the Chief Executive, the Fundraising and Marketing Manager and the Treasurer. Applications are anonymised when presented to the Committee. All applications are in writing on a form and must be supported by a healthcare professional from the treatment centre attended by the applicant.

We don't normally consider applications for the following:

- Holidays as there are charities specifically devoted to providing these
- Deposits for Motability cars because the Motability scheme provided assistance towards deposits and many cars do not require deposits. However, recently Motability has refused to fund the first £500 of deposits so where a strong medical case can be made for requiring a car with a deposit we are sometimes funding these
- Driving lessons as these can be funded by the Motability scheme
- Ongoing bills e.g. gas, electricity etc.
- Hospital travelling expenses when these can be met through the benefits system.

We have helped provide fridges, cookers, beds, bedding, washing machines, carpets, sofas, and made contributions to the costs of funerals among other things. Sometimes we have identified that people are not claiming their full entitlement to benefits. Where we are unable to help we can often suggest other sources of help and sometimes help with applications.

Ruth Taylor  
26.7.04