

From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive



Department of
Health
An Roinn Siáinte
Máinnystre O Poustle
www.health-ni.gov.uk

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Our ref: RP2174
SCORR-0185-2018

Your ref: 107/180222/01

Date: 26th March 2018

Dear Mr Farry

Thank you for your email of 20 March on behalf of your constituent who has expressed Thank you for your letter of 22 February 2018 on behalf of your constituent Mrs Joyce McKelvey regarding her application for a widow's payment from the Infected Blood Payment Scheme for Northern Ireland.

While I appreciate that it may be frustrating and distressing for Mrs McKelvey as she tries to retrieve her late husband's medical records, the retention and destruction of medical records are governed by Good Management, Good Records, the record schedule for Health and Social Care organisations and the Department. This provides a framework for consistent and effective records management based on advice and publications from the Ministry of Justice and the Public Records Office Northern Ireland. Medical records are usually destroyed 10 years after death.

It is against this background that officials in the Department have contacted the Belfast Trust and the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service to look into this matter. The Department has established that further information is needed in order to progress the case. Mr McKelvey's family should contact the manager of the Infected Blood Payment Scheme for Northern Ireland, Mr Colin Murray, on [GRO-C]. He will liaise with the relevant officials in the Department, Health and Social Trusts and NIBTS to see if any other records can be retrieved.

Also, for data protection reasons Mr McKelvey's family will have to contact Alliance House in London themselves to establish whether they hold any information on Mr McKelvey. Alliance House housed the previous UK infected blood scheme charities, and as with all new applications to the scheme in Northern Ireland, confirmation is needed as to whether or not Alliance House holds any information on the person infected or the family affected. Alliance House cannot share personal data about scheme beneficiaries with this Department without the consent of the beneficiary or of their family. The Director of Operations at Alliance House, Victoria Prouse, can be contacted by email victoria@ [GRO-C] or by telephone on [GRO-C]

Working for a Healthier People



WITN0525002_0001

I trust that this matter can be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

RICHARD PENGELLY

1801
POE