

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN CLOSING SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

1. In a written statement for the opening session of the infected Blood Inquiry ("Inquiry"), the Welsh Government's then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething, confirmed that Welsh Government officials would continue to support the Inquiry team, to ensure that the voices of those affected in Wales are heard and the survivors and their families feel assured that the Inquiry will take account of their evidence and provide answers to their questions and concerns.
2. Now that the oral evidence hearings have concluded, the Welsh Government recognises that those infected and affected in Wales have indeed now had an opportunity to have their voices heard by giving evidence to and participating in the Inquiry.
3. Similarly, the Welsh Government has welcomed being requested to participate in the Inquiry by providing written and oral evidence on specified issues; and by providing open access to the documents held in its archives, which are relevant to the issues being considered by the Inquiry, from periods both prior to and following devolution.
4. Various witnesses from or formerly with the Welsh Government have given evidence to the Inquiry on a number of areas, including:
 - The Deputy Chief Medical Officer, on assorted practices and procedures within the Welsh Government and NHS Wales.
 - The former Minister for Health and Social Services, on a range of issues relating to treatment and the operation of support schemes in Wales, including the move towards broad parity between the four nations.
 - The current Minister for Health and Social Services, with further evidence on the operation of the support schemes in Wales.
 - The Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Government, on various practices and procedures within the Civil Service in Wales.

5. Having considered the evidence already provided to the Inquiry by the above witnesses and others, both those connected with Wales and outside, the Welsh Government does not, in addition, propose to make any written submissions to the Inquiry on the conclusions which the Chair should reach on either factual findings or recommendations.
6. When giving evidence, the Permanent Secretary confirmed that he is committed to ensure that the Welsh Government responds fully and appropriately to the Inquiry. Accordingly, the Welsh Government looks forward to considering the Chair's recommendations, including any recommendations for compensation which is additional to the support packages and ex gratia payments which have been and are in place, and any recommendations in relation to ongoing treatment, care and support.
7. Finally, we also confirm that the Welsh Government is committed to continue working with the other administrations, in responding to the Inquiry's recommendations on a four nations basis, with a view to achieving the best possible outcomes for beneficiaries in Wales.

Geldards LLP

13 December 2022