



GUIDE TO STATEMENTS OF APPROACH

All public inquiries publish documents explaining how they will go about their work: this Inquiry describes such documents as 'statements of approach'.

It is not necessary to read all of these statements in full to participate in the Inquiry: this note sets out the key points so you can decide what to read. If you have any questions about the documents please get in touch with the Inquiry team on contact@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk or freephone 0808 169 1377.

You will see a reference in the statements to people who were 'infected and affected': 'infected' means people who were infected by blood or blood products, and 'affected' means partners, children, parents, families, carers and others close to people infected.

Evidence 1: invitation to express interest in providing evidence

This note asks people who are infected and/or affected to complete a short form telling the Inquiry how they would like to provide evidence. This is a very important form. We hope many people will complete it. If you are thinking about providing evidence, you should read the full note.

The form asks you to provide your contact details and basic information about how you were infected, whether you received any financial support and whether you have documents that you would like to provide as evidence (at a later point). **We are not asking you to provide a written statement now.**

The form also asks how you would like to provide your evidence to the Inquiry and whether you would be willing to give evidence in person at a public hearing. Gathering this information now will help the Inquiry team to plan its work on witness evidence.

Infected Blood Inquiry

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Evidence 2: Gathering written statements

This statement explains how the Inquiry will gather written statements.

The Inquiry will contact people who complete the form described above, and others such as government officials and medical professionals, and if they have relevant evidence will ask them to provide a written statement.

If we ask you to provide a statement you can do this by yourself, with help from your lawyer, or you can ask the Inquiry team to help.

There is also guidance on the format of the written statement and on anonymity: you should read this if you are asked to provide a written statement.

Anonymity and Redaction

This statement explains how the Inquiry will treat requests for anonymity. The Chair is likely to agree to a request for anonymity from someone who is infected or affected whose evidence includes personal sensitive information: you should read this statement if this applies to you.

Redaction is the word used when text is blacked out of a document so that it can no longer be read. Restriction orders are used to limit the sharing of information. This statement explains how the Inquiry will use these two methods to protect personal information or remove information that is not relevant to the Inquiry.

If you are providing documents to the Inquiry you should do so without removing any information – the Inquiry team will do this.

Core Participant Status

This statement sets out the approach this Inquiry is taking to core participants. These are individuals or organisations with a particular interest in how a public inquiry goes about its work, and with specific rights under the Inquiry Rules.

It is not necessary to be a core participant to provide evidence to the Inquiry and there are many other ways to participate in this Inquiry such as providing a written statement, providing evidence or speaking at a public hearing. Core participants will also be expected to work with the Inquiry on its procedures.

The Inquiry Rules require the Chair to consider whether that individual or organisation has played a significant role in the subject of the Inquiry, has a significant interest in the Inquiry, or might be subject to criticism (if you believe this applies to you, you should read the relevant parts of this statement). The Chair must also consider the need to avoid unnecessary cost.

In addition to this, the Chair can consider other matters relevant to the particular Inquiry. In his **Statement on Core Participant Status**, the Chair has set out other aspects he will consider in view of the scale of this Inquiry: including being part of one of the campaign groups, or having joined with others to instruct lawyers in earlier proceedings or to advise on matters which are closely linked to the Inquiry, or showing that your involvement would add to achieving the aims of the Inquiry. Although it is not necessary to have a lawyer to be a core participant, many people have joined together under four firms of lawyers (Collins Solicitors, Leigh Day, Thompsons Solicitors Scotland, and Watkins & Gunn). Individuals must apply to be core participants but the Chair expects to grant core participant status to people who are already represented by these firms. The Inquiry Rules require the Chair to direct core participants with similar interests to be represented by the same legal representative and so it is likely that funding will not be available for a large number of different legal representatives.

It is important to note that it is not necessary for core participants to be represented by a lawyer: if you are interested in becoming a core participant, you should read this statement.

Legal Representation at Public Expense

This is a long technical statement with details about how legal costs will be calculated and paid. If you are represented by a lawyer, your lawyer will handle this for you. If not, the key points to note are that the Chair expects to grant legal expenses where it is in the public interest and the applicant has relevant evidence, is a core participant (subject to the point above about legal representation for core participants) and/or is an individual who may be criticised in the Inquiry.

Please note that this document is a guide only. The authoritative texts are the Statements of Approach and the Chair's Statements.