



Fleetbank House
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To: Duncan Selbie (PHE)
Cc: David Geddes (NHS England)

18th September 2019

Dear Duncan

On 13th September, Public Health England (PHE) published the annual 'Hepatitis C in England' report, accompanied by a press release about the numbers of people unaware they may be infected with hepatitis C (HCV).

It is with disappointment that I note that, despite media reporting about the Infected Blood Inquiry, your report does not pay greater attention to the likelihood of people being infected through blood transfusions prior to the introduction of screening who are therefore unaware that they have been infected. This is the fourth annual report to make only brief reference to this group of people.

The Inquiry has heard from a number of witnesses in oral evidence hearings this summer about HCV infection through transfusion. We expect to hear more witnesses with similar evidence again next month.

The failure to highlight this route of infection, alongside the focus on drug users, risks perpetuating the failure to identify, test and diagnose people infected through transfusions. It also risks exacerbating the stigma felt by those infected through transfusion.

While I acknowledge it is too late to amend your latest report I hope this letter will help inform your approach to future publications. The response of Government (including public bodies) to the use of infected blood and blood products is within the Inquiry's terms of reference. By making this letter public I hope to reassure people infected through transfusions that the Inquiry takes seriously their calls for others to be identified, tested and treated.

Yours sincerely

Sir Brian Langstaff
Chair, Infected Blood Inquiry

Infected Blood Inquiry

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