

POLICY - IN CONFIDENCE

Chief Executive

PATIENTS WITH HIV FROM INFECTED BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

1. This minute is to advise you that we have been informed today by the Department of Health that the Prime Minister has decided to announce tomorrow at Question Time that it is proposed to make payments to patients with HIV from infected blood transfusions on a similar basis as that made to haemophiliac patients with HIV.

2. The Secretary of State for Health will follow this up with a brief press statement announcing that a detailed scheme will be drawn up. There is to be some form of an Appeals Panel headed by a QC for doubtful cases but beyond that DoH are not able to indicate any further details. As in the past DoH have taken the lead on this and our influence on the detail of the policy is relatively small.

3. We understand that Treasury have refused to fund the compensation payments from the Reserve and Mr Waldegrave appears to have accepted that he will fund the English cases from his Vote. No doubt Treasury will expect us to do the same and while it is difficult to estimate costs accurately at this stage, we are aware of at least 12 cases. On the basis of minimum costs around £1 million will be required but this could go up to possibly a maximum of £2 million depending on how many cases come out of the woodwork. As you are aware we have made no provision for this settlement and we would have to raid other budgets next year. I propose to discuss this with Mr Collier and Mr Rushworth.

4. In the meantime, we shall advise Ministers of the proposed announcement. Mr Forsyth will wish to make a statement indicating that a similar scheme will apply to Scottish patients and we propose to offer a draft Press Notice to this effect as soon as we see Mr Waldegrave's statement.

5. I should be glad to know whether you agree that we should seek the funds from the HCH Vote for next year.

GRO-C

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12 February 1992

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GRO-C

JSH00412.022

*Miss Falconer
Mr Hogg*

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*I have drafted a Press Notice for
SJS and*

*cleared
it
with
IND.*

*We are meeting
Mr Henderson today
at 1200hrs to discuss
whether or not we need
a separate expert panel
for Scotland.
We also await a response
from PFO about funding*

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