

From: Clare MacDonald
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PRIME MINISTER

cc: Jeremy Heywood
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CMC
See comments. Slightly losing
confidence in DH. We want
more where possible and not balanced
by LSS for once. Case &
brief if necessary. GRO-C 14.1.

FINAL PACKAGE FOR CONTAMINATED BLOOD

With apologies for another submission on this issue, this is a final check that you are happy with how your concerns on the proposed contaminated blood consultation have been addressed. Jane Ellison will make an oral statement launching the consultation next Thursday.

Lump sum payments

** And by the way a detailed report will*
appear on this.

You asked for lump sum payments of £20k to those newly diagnosed with hepatitis C and HIV to continue. The consultation now makes it clear these lump sum payments will remain.

The lump sum payments of £50k when individuals progress to stage 2 of hepatitis C are more difficult. This is because they could encourage people not to accept treatment, as there would be a substantial financial incentive to allow their condition to worsen and receive the payment instead. DH officials are concerned this might be unethical, but we do not have any evidence about how those infected will view this issue.

DH propose to highlight these concerns in the consultation and propose that the stage 2 payments should not continue, but seek the views of those infected as to whether this is appropriate. This will allow those affected to respond with their

Wrong. By all means raise the
issue but making this
proposal is CRAZY.
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views as to how we should handle these payments in future, and for us to finalise the approach to this issue once we have further evidence following consultation.

Are you content with this approach to stage 1 and stage 2 lump sum payments? No. *Depends on the circumstances*

Payments to the bereaved

You were clear that ongoing payments should not be removed from the bereaved relatives of an infected person. The consultation now sets out that these payments will be maintained. The consultation will also seek views on whether the bereaved would welcome the option of a lump sum payment as an alternative, as this choice has been requested in the past. The consultation is clear that this would be a choice for the individual – anyone who wanted to continue receiving exactly the same payments as before would be able to.

However, the consultation proposes a different approach to those who may be bereaved in future, as opposed to those who are already bereaved and receiving payments. At the moment, payments to the bereaved are means tested, so only a small fraction of those bereaved receive any payments at all, and these payments differ wildly. Rather than this haphazard approach, in the new scheme all the newly bereaved would receive a one off, non means tested payment equal to a year's continuation of their partner's annual payment. *is that more or less*

This seems to strike a reasonable balance between maintaining payments to all the bereaved who currently get them, but moving those who are newly bereaved to a more systematic approach where everyone gets something. *than before.*

Are you content with this approach to those already bereaved, and to those who may be bereaved in future?

We will ensure the consultation reflects your final steers when it is launched on 21 January. You are also meeting with a constituent on Friday on this issue, for which you will receive a separate briefing. The headline commitment will be to provide another £100m of support to those affected, in addition to the £25m you have already committed. Once the consultation has closed, we will come back to you to check the final details of the new scheme before it is implemented later this year.

CLARE MACDONALD