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## PUBLICATION - SPEECH/STATEMENT

# Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme - payment changes: statement

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A summary of changes to Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme payments in light of the UK Government announcement of 25 March and what this means for beneficiaries.

## Information on changes to SIBSS payments in light of the UK Government announcement of 25 March 2021

Following comments about the disparities between infected blood payments across the UK by the Chair of the Infected Blood Inquiry, Sir Brian Langstaff, agreement has been reached in principle between the four devolved governments to reduce these disparities.

The Scottish Government is still waiting for confirmation of funding details from the UK Government, but we currently expect that the following changes will be made to the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme to bring annual payments into alignment across the UK. Beneficiaries who currently receive an annual payment (paid monthly or quarterly) should receive their new payments as soon as is feasible – SIBSS will work on this as quickly as they can, but will confirm arrangements once a new amending Scheme document is ready. In the meantime, you will receive the payments you were previously notified about (see the SIBSS previously planned column below).

All changes to annual payments will be backdated to April 2019 so regular payments you received since then for any time period you were eligible will be topped up to reflect the levels paid by the English Infected Blood Support Scheme in 2019-20 and 2020-21. While backdated payments will take a little longer to process, we hope that these payments will be made by the summer. If you already receive an annual payment, you do not need to do anything to apply for the backdated money as SIBSS will arrange payment for you.

The expected new payments levels for SIBSS effective from April 2021 are set out below in the right-hand column.

SIBSS	UK Parity
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	(previously planned)	Payments
	2021-22	2021-22*
Chronic HCV Stage 1 (moderately affected)	£6,439	£19,456
Chronic HCV Stage 1 (severely affected)	£19,317	£29,224
Advanced HCV (Stage 2)	£27,596	£29,224
HIV	£27,596	£29,224
Coinfected	£37,817	£45,616
Widows/ers/partners – chronic HCV – moderately affected	£4,829	£14,184
Widows/ers/partners – chronic HCV – severely affected	£14,488	£21,510
Widows/ers/partners – advanced HCV or HIV	£20,697	£21,510
Widows/ers/partners - coinfectd	£28,363	£33,804

\* Note – the UK payment levels for the infected include a winter fuel allowance. SIBSS will confirm in due course when this part of the payment will be paid.

Those in the Stage 1 group who have self-assessed that hepatitis c (HCV) has no noticeable impact on their day to day life will also now be able to get an annual payment and payments backdated to April 2019. The Scottish Government hopes to be able to confirm details of the new payment levels soon and SIBSS will then provide application forms to beneficiaries in this group as soon as possible.

Please note that the payment levels set out above for the bereaved widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners of an infected beneficiary who died are for those whose spouse or partner died over 12 months ago. If your spouse or partner died within the last 12 months you will get the same amount as your spouse or partner would have been entitled to until the first 12 months have passed.

In addition, those widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners who have since remarried, entered into a new civil partnership or are living with a new partner will now be

since remained, entered into a new civil partnership or are living with a new partner will now be able to receive these regular annual payments as well and will also receive backdated top-up payments for period from April 2019.

Effective from April 2021, a new £10,000 lump sum payment will now be made on the death of a beneficiary to support their family with expenses, such as funeral costs. This will be available both to widows, widowers, civil partners or long-term cohabiting partners of a beneficiary who has died or, if they did not have a partner, the deceased person's estate will be able to claim this payment. SIBSS will prepare a short application forms soon for this new payment.

In addition, we expect HIV lump sum payments to be increased for existing infected beneficiaries who have received less than £80,500 and will be able to make the £10,000 bereavement payment available to widows, widowers, partners and estates of those SIBSS beneficiaries who have died since 1 April 2017.

## Contact

Please contact the SIBSS team if you have any queries.

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