

20 February 2004

Minister for Health and Community Care

Copy to: First Minister
Deputy First Minister
Minister for Justice
Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care
Solicitor General
Crown Agent
Chief Executive
PS/HD
Richard Henderson
Bill Gilchrist
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Communications

ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF HAEMOPHILIACS

You may be aware that in spring of 2003, Strathclyde Police submitted a report to crown counsel seeking instructions on a complaint that had been made by the Scottish Haemophilic Groups Forum making allegations about the supply of blood products to Haemophiliacs. It was alleged by the Scottish Haemophilia Groups Forum that haemophiliacs were infected with Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS by being treated with contaminated blood products. Successive governments and health authorities were said to be aware that there were risks associated with these treatments but patients were not advised of them. The authorities, whilst knowing of the risks took no remedial action in relation to them, and where they did take action were dilatory about it. The haemophiliacs also complain that they were tested for Hepatitis C/HIVAIDS without their consent or knowledge.

I understand that your department has an interest in this matter as the Forum have requested that a public inquiry be held.

I am writing to advise you that Crown Counsel having given careful consideration to this matter have decided that further investigation would not be justified as there is insufficient evidence that any criminal offence has been committed. Crown Counsels decision is to be communicated to the media on 23 February 2004

I trust this information is of assistance to you

COLIN BOYD