

Witness Name: Susan Gorman

Statement No: WITN2753003

Exhibits: WITN2753004-5

Dated: May 2019

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

---

**EXHIBIT WITN2753004**

---

Dear Su Gorman,

Firstly, I extend my condolences regarding the recent death of your husband.

Thank you for your time today, where we were able to discuss your questions and feedback regarding the NHSBSA England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS). I have summarised the questions you raised on our call below and the additional feedback regarding the telephone manner in which advice has been previously provided.

### **Questions & Answers**

**Q1)** You've questioned the appropriateness of question 'How would this benefit you?' on one of the application forms provided to you.

Upon investigation I can confirm that this question appears on the application form for 'Discretionary one-off payments', the purpose of this

form is explained in my response to question 2 below. Your initial concern was that this form was worded inappropriately for an application form to support a bereaved spouses/partner, which this form is not solely intended for.

I can confirm that this question is appropriate for the assessment of the type of support it relates to, this would be for additional types of one-off support, which you could receive and is not the 'Application form for lump sum payment for bereaved spouses/partners'.

I appreciate that at this difficult time, receiving four different types of forms to complete may be confusing, if you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, our support team will be ready to assist you. Their contact details are as follows: Telephone: 0300 330 1294 Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm or email: [nhsbsa.eibss@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.eibss@nhs.net)

Additionally the title of each form and its purpose are explained below in my response to question 2.

**Q2)** You would like to know why you've been supplied with the wrong forms to complete, if you only need to apply for a change of circumstances and a bereaved payment.

I have had our records checked to confirm which forms have been provided to you, to cover all types of potential support you may be entitled to receive. I can confirm that to-date you should have four types of application form and accompanying guidance, in addition to the form itself, where appropriate. The four forms and their purpose are explained below.

- **Application form for lump sum payment for bereaved spouses/partners**

Please complete this form and return it to the EIBSS if you were the co-habiting spouse/partner of an EIBSS registrant whose cause of death was linked to hepatitis C and/or HIV

- **Contact preferences and change of details form**

The change of details form can be used to tell us of a change of: (1) name, address or bank details, (2) contact preferences, (3) to authorise another person to speak on your behalf

- **Discretionary one-off payments application form**

Discretionary one-off payments are a form of financial support that beneficiaries and bereaved spouses/partners may apply for to cover the cost of certain essential, health-related items or services.

- **Income top-up payments and child payments application form**

An income top-up payment is a discretionary monthly payment to increase your household income to help with general living costs. An assessment is made of your household income and if the income is below set thresholds an application can be made to receive payments.

**Q3)** You would like to know that if EIBSS pay the £4,500 quarterly payment, upon receipt of your completed change of 'Contact preferences and change of details form' you will be required to pay this back

I can confirm that if EIBSS pay the next quarterly payment of £4,500 following successful receipt of your completed 'Contact preferences and change of details form' you would be expected to pay back this payment, the repayment terms would be flexible, based upon your circumstances.

As explained this payment may assist you through the waiting period, whilst you await the death certificate, which you've indicated could take some time. As explained, upon receipt of the death certificate you would be able to apply for a lump sum payment for bereaved spouses/partners.

Now that I have confirmed you would need to repay the £4,500 quarterly payment, please can you confirm whether you would like EIBSS to continue with this payment, once we've received the application form accompanied by the evidence from your GP?

**Q4)** You would like to know if the certified 'notification of death' from your GP would be suitable evidence to support your 'Application form for lump sum payment for bereaved spouses/partners'

It is possible that the certified 'notification of death' from your GP would be appropriate evidence to support your 'Application form for lump sum payment for bereaved spouses/partners'. As discussed this must confirm that on the balance of probability, infection with hepatitis C contributed to the death of your spouse/partner.

We also discussed that you would be willing to send me a digital version of the 'notification of death' from your GP, to check that it would be suitable evidence, ahead of making your application. If you would like me to check this for you, please reply to this email with the notification attached.

### **Feedback**

As I explained on our call the support EIBSS offers is actively reviewed through the feedback it receives from beneficiaries and their families, feedback is provided by post, email, telephone and focus groups. Your feedback regarding the telephone manner provided by EIBSS staff in response to your call in early January 2019, will be referred to the appropriate Manager for investigation and potential retraining provided, dependant on the outcome of the investigation.

I hope that I have appropriately captured the questions and feedback from our discussion earlier today and that you find my responses helpful.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further assistance in this matter, in particular to check though the notification from your GP, as referenced in my response at point 4 above. However I kindly ask that if you require any information and/or assistance in completing the application forms you've been sent, please contact the EIBSS support team directly as they are better placed to answer these than me, their contact details are supplied