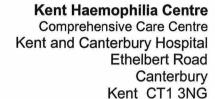
**NHS Trust** 



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MW/SP

9 December 2004

Dr F Hill
Chairman, UKHCDO
Department of Clinical & Laboratory Haematology
The Birmingham Children's Hospital
Steelhouse Lane
BIRMINGHAM
B4 6NH

Dear Frank

Please find enclosed a draft letter concerning the Skipton Fund.

As the Skipton Fund is only the servant of the DoH - and does not set policy – on reflection I think it would be better to direct the correspondence directly to the DoH, with copies going to Peter Stevens and Martin Harvey at the Skipton Fund.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

**Dr Mark Winter** Haemophilia Centre Director

## DRAFT

Dear Williams

## Re: The Skipton Fund

The matter of the hepatitis C ex gratia payment scheme was discussed at length by the Comprehensive Care Centre Directors at their meeting of 29 November 2004. Taylor on 7 100 30000

There is significant disquiet amongst Haemophilia Centre Directors about the criteria being used for this scheme Under the terms of the original criteria, patients who are hepatitis C antibody positive who have abnormal liver function demonstrable at some stage will qualify for payment. As there are many potential medical causes of abnormal liver function—including excessive ingestion of alcohol—this inappropriate criterion must inevitably allow a number of patients to be approved for payment who do not have (and never have had) circulating hepatitis C virus.

We are aware that a number of patients who are hepatitis C antibody positive and who are persistently PCR negative (and therefore not eligible for payment under the criteria) have applied to the Skipton Fund whereas many patients in a similar situation have not.

Given the above, it seems to us that the only way out of an unsatisfactory situation is to offer all patients who are hepatitis C antibody positive the part 1 payment, as otherwise the scheme as it stands can only be divisive and unfair.

We would also strongly recommend that the very small number of patients who acquired hepatitis B from treatment with contaminated coagulation factor concentrates (and not hepatitis C) should also be included for payment.

We would be please to discuss further our views on this matter.

Yours sincerely