

Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme

Newsletter Issue 1



Welcome to the first issue of the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme Newsletter (SIBSS). You will receive this newsletter twice a year keeping you informed and making you aware of any updates or changes to the scheme that may affect you or your families.

Meet the team

There are three members of our administration team please feel free to contact us at anytime during business hours. Email [NSS.SIBSS @nhs.net](mailto:NSS.SIBSS@nhs.net)



Sally Richards
Scheme Manager



Carol O'Connor
Payments Manager



Lisa Scammell
Assistant Payments Manager

Scheme News

Living Cost Supplement

The Living Cost Supplement is an annual payment of £1000, which replaces the previously named Winter Fuel Allowance. This payment is for those with chronic hepatitis C and is also available to widows, widowers, civil partners or other long-term partners who were living with a beneficiary when they died and are not receiving a regular annual widow's payment. The application form is now available on our website <https://nhsnss.org.sibss>.

Changes to widows payments

The Scottish Government has changed the criteria to now provide annual widows payments to long-term cohabiting partners, as well as those who were married or in civil partnerships. Please see our website <https://nhsnss.org.sibss> for further details and an application form.



Changes to guidance and forms

Since our launch in April 2017 we have listened to your feedback and have made some minor amendments to our guidance notes to add clarity to the eligibility criteria and the appeals process. Forms and guidance have also been updated to reflect the change in scheme criteria for long-term partners. <https://nhsnss.org/media/2031/sibss-guidance-for-widows-v10-final.pdf>

UK Inquiry

On 11 July the UK Government announced its intention to call a UK Inquiry into the events that led to people being infected with HIV and/or hepatitis C through NHS-supplied blood or blood products. They are currently engaging with those affected before taking a final decision on the Inquiry format to ensure that whatever is established is in the interests of those affected, and to understand preferences for the style, scope and duration of the Inquiry. The consultation deadline has been extended to 18 October 2017. SIBSS has distributed letters to beneficiaries on behalf of the UK Government to keep you informed of these developments.

Scheme payments

From April 17 to August 17 we have paid out over £3 million to beneficiaries and their families. For more guidance on what you may be eligible to apply for, please visit our website <https://nhsnss.org.sibss>

DWP Declaration

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have asked us to inform you that you are required to declare to the DWP that you are receiving payments from SIBSS. They will ignore this payment when working out entitlement to benefit but if you do not tell DWP about this money, they will not be able to determine what money they should ignore and any benefits that depend on the amount of money you have could be affected.

You can send your comments on these matters to the UK Government at infectedbloodinquiry@dh.gsi.gov.uk or by post addressed to:
Infected Blood Inquiry
Department of Health
Room 164
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS



Clinical Review

In line with the recommendation of the independent Scottish Financial Review Group, Professor David Goldberg of Health Protection Scotland is now leading an evidence-based Clinical Review of the various health impacts of chronic hepatitis C (HCV), including psychological impacts. The review will assess the international evidence regarding conditions associated with chronic HCV infection and any long-term side-effects caused by past treatments for HCV, such as interferon. This work is already underway and will help inform the way forward in relation to the support available from the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme for those with chronic HCV. Professor Goldberg also intends to interview a small, random selection of SIBSS beneficiaries about their personal experiences of HCV infection – therefore, it's possible that you might be asked if you would be willing to be interviewed. The review should report to Scottish Ministers by April 2018.

Remittance Advice

If you would like to receive an email remittance advice for monthly payments received contact the SIBSS team – see contact details below.

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