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Department  
of Health

Mrs Mary Grindley

GRO-A

London

GRO-A

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23 July 2002

Dear Mrs Grindley

Thank you for your letter of Thursday 30 May 2002 to Tony Blair regarding a public inquiry for haemophiliacs who were infected with HIV and hepatitis C through infected NHS blood products. I have been asked to reply and I am very sorry for the delay in doing so.

I would like to reassure you that the Government takes the issues around haemophilia and blood products very seriously, and has great sympathy for anyone who has suffered harm as a result of NHS treatment. Ministers do understand the hardship and great distress that people with haemophilia and their families have suffered, first from HIV and then from hepatitis C, and deeply regret that so many people were infected through blood products.

The Government has considered the call for a public inquiry very carefully and the issue has been debated in the House of Parliament many times and in meetings with Ministers and voluntary organisations also calling for a public inquiry. The Government decision is that all the information is already in the public domain and they do not think it is the way forward.

I have spoken in confidence to Ann Hithersay at the Macfarlane Trust this morning and she will write to you very shortly, in case there is any further help the Trust can offer.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Jill Taylor  
Blood Policy Team

GRO-C

cc: Ann Hithersay MFT