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GRO-A

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31 October 2006

Dear Ms GRO-A

Thank you for your email of 12 October. I am sorry to see that you had not received an acknowledgement or reply to your previous email of 1 August. Unfortunately, the Department's reply was sent to an incomplete email address and the return from the internet service provider was overlooked. Please accept my apologies for this oversight and I now enclose a copy of our earlier reply.

Turning to your email of 12 October. We have considered your comments about breaches in the Macfarlane Trust deed, but we are satisfied that Trustees are properly discharging the Trust and we do not think that there are any reasons for revising the Trust deed. You may already be aware that the Minister, after carefully considering the Macfarlane Trust's submission for increased funding, advised the Chairman of the Trust of increased funding for 2006/07. It is for the Trustees then to manage the Fund within its available resources.

We have considered the call for a public inquiry very carefully. However, as previously stated, the Government does not accept that any wrongful practices were employed and does not consider that a public inquiry is justified. Donor screening for hepatitis C was introduced in the UK in 1991 and the development of this test marked a major advance in microbiological technology, which could not have been implemented before this time.

As to a possible meeting between the Minister and you MP, no doubt Mr Cousins will get in touch with this office.

Yours Sincerely

GRO-C

Jacky Buchan
Assistant Private Secretary