

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PQ1612	2000-2001
NAMED DAY WRITTEN	

Mr Jim Cunningham (Coventry South): To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to grant special payments to haemophilia sufferers who have contracted the hepatitis C infection as a result of treatment with the human derived blood product factor 8. (154221).

For Answer on:	19/03/2001
Notice Paper Date:	14/03/2001
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MP (Party):	Cunningham, Jim (Lab)
MP Number:	5079

DRAFT REPLY TO REACH PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH BY
12:00 Friday 16 March 2001

PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS UNIT
FINAL MINUTE

1. Reply approved by:

Name	<i>Alex Berland</i>	Building	<i>WEL</i>
	Branch Head	Room	<i>406A</i>
Branch	<i>HSD2</i>	Ext	GRO-C
		Date	<i>15.3.01</i>

2. Reply composed by:

Name	<i>Jill Taylor</i>	Ext	GRO-C
Room	<i>417</i>	Building	<i>WEL</i>

3. The following special points should be noted:

Wednesday 14 March 2001
Written Answer

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Cunningham, Jim (Lab Coventry South):

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SUGGESTED REPLY

We have reviewed the previous Government's decision not to offer financial assistance to haemophilia patients infected with hepatitis C through blood products. We concluded that an exception could not be made to the general rule that compensation or financial help is only given when the NHS, or individuals working in it, have been at fault.

Background

This is one of 2 PQs (the other is PQ1611) from Jack Cunningham MP on issues relating to haemophilia.

The Haemophilia Society (Lord Morris is President) has a long running campaign to obtain compensation for haemophiliacs infected with hepatitis C through contaminated blood products before the technology existed to inactivate the virus.

As the NHS introduced viral inactivation as soon as the technology became available in the mid 1980s, Ministers in this, and the previous, Government have concluded that a compensation scheme could not be justified. This issue has been debated in both Houses on numerous occasions.

Lord Hunt met the Haemophilia Society in January 2001 where this issue was discussed and the Government's policy on compensation was made clear.