

Witness name: Sean Cavens

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INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

EXHIBIT WITN1146021

Infected Blood Support Scheme: Written statement - HCWS1527

WS**Department of Health and Social Care**

Made on: 30 April 2019

Made by: **Jackie Doyle-Price** (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention)

Commons

HCWS1527

Infected Blood Support Scheme

Today the Government has announced its intention to increase the financial support for beneficiaries of the infected blood support scheme in England, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).

This follows a meeting on 21 January 2019 between myself, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Infected Blood Inquiry secretariat and affected beneficiaries where I committed to looking at where further improvements might be made to the support provided by the existing infected blood scheme.

In this announcement, we have set out our plans for a major uplift in the financial support available to infected and affected beneficiaries of the infected blood support scheme in England. The current annual cost of the scheme is estimated at £46.3m per annum and we expect this will increase to over £75m to provide for these uplifted payments.

The level of support provided to infected beneficiaries will increase. In addition, the upper threshold level of household income currently used to means-test support provided for the bereaved will also be substantially raised allowing more bereaved beneficiaries to be eligible for additional support from the scheme.

All beneficiaries will be sent a letter by NHSBSA this week setting out the details of the changes and the impact they will have on them. This detailed payment information will also be made available on NHSBSA's website. All new payments will be backdated to 1 April 2019.

I have also announced my intention to reach out to the devolved administrations to look at how we might provide greater parity of support across the United Kingdom. I will update Hon. Members on these conversations in due course.

Today's announcement reconfirms the Government's commitment to providing those affected by the infected blood tragedy of the 1970s and 1980s with a fair and transparent support scheme, one which focusses on their welfare and long-term independence.

It also reaffirms the Prime Minister's support for the Infected Blood Inquiry, which she ordered in 2017, and which specifically asked for the support given to those affected by infected blood be looked at again. The Government will continue to listen to and co-operate fully with the Inquiry.

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: **HLWS1489**