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Andy Burnham says he will hand over damning evidence about contaminated blood to the police unless the new Government sets up an inquiry into the scandal

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Andy Burnham MP

Andy Burnham, a former health secretary and Labour candidate for the Mayor of Greater Manchester has evidence that medical records may have been altered.

He will use an adjournment debate in The House of Commons on Tuesday to issue an ultimatum to all party leaders: "Make a manifesto pledge to launch a Hillsborough-style inquiry into the contaminated blood scandal or I will refer evidence of wrong-doing to the Police and ask them to undertake a comprehensive investigation."

Mr Burnham will also present MPs with a file of evidence which he says could form the basis of a police investigation into the scandal.

About 7,500 people in the UK, many haemophiliacs, contracted HIV and hepatitis C after receiving transfusions from imported blood products taken from high-risk donors in the 1970s and 1980s. More than 2,000 have since died.

Now Mr Burnham says he has evidence that medical records were tampered with to disguise the issue: "I have been provided with examples where people have been given completely inappropriate treatment, have been tested without their knowledge and left without a life-threatening diagnosis and have heard of countless examples of medical records being destroyed."

"I've seen evidence that one victim had his medical records altered to suggest that his liver disease had been caused by alcoholism although his widow says he rarely drank."

"Parliament has collectively failed the families of those caught up in the contaminated blood scandal and this must now be rectified," Mr Burnham said.

He said that just as amended police statements had reopened the Hillsborough inquiry into the death of 96 football fans in 1989, the evidence of amended medical records "must reopen the contaminated blood scandal."

"It is a national disgrace that these families have been left waiting for answers and without justice for decades," Said Burnham who last week announced he would be standing down as MP for Leigh after 16 years. He is currently standing to become the first ever elected Mayor of Greater Manchester.

"Before I leave Parliament I felt compelled to say what I know. What is now required is a Hillsborough-style inquiry which will look into exactly what happened and who ordered the cover-up, which is why I will call on the leaders of all political parties to make it a manifesto pledge."

"It is a national outrage that this evidence has been there for so long and nobody has done anything about it. There is evidence of criminal behaviour and it is utterly immoral for it to be ignored any longer."

Mr Burnham said he has already raised the issue with those drawing up the Labour Party manifesto.

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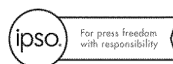
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