

Witness Name: Liam Mclvor
Statement No: WITN4507016
Exhibits: WITN4507017-027
Dated: 23 November 2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

SECOND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF LIAM MCIVOR

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 12 August 2020.

I, Liam Mclvor, will say as follows: -

- 1. At 2(b) of your response, you refer to the Service Level Agreement between Regional Business Services Organisation (BSO) and the Department of Health Northern Ireland (DHNI), which is attached at WITN4507011. The Agreement states that BSO makes decisions about eligibility before seeking additional funding from DHNI, who will then "determine" how much money will be paid out under the Scheme. Does DHNI accept BSO decisions about eligibility at face value, or does it perform a further review function in "determining" how much funding the Scheme will receive?**

The Northern Ireland Department of Health accept BSO decisions on eligibility to the scheme. The DHNI use the SLA statistics to determine how much funding the BSO can draw down to meet the requirements of the scheme.

- 2. Please provide copies of the quarterly summaries of Scheme activity referred to at paragraph 10.2 of the Service Level Agreement**

Please refer to the following exhibits:

WITN4507017: October 2017 to March 2018 summary
WITN4507018: April to June 2018 summary
WITN4507019: July to September 2018 summary
WITN4507020: October to December 2018 summary

- 3. In respect of your response at 2(d), why has the Scheme not undertaken any reviews or consultation regarding its policies or level of payments?**

Please refer this question to the Northern Ireland Department of Health

- 4. Also in respect of your response at 2(d), did the Scheme receive the records of transitioning beneficiaries from the Alliance House Organisations? If not, why not**

The Scheme did not receive the full records of transitioning beneficiaries other than what was contained in the spreadsheet information forwarded from the Alliance House Organisations to the BSO. Please see WITN4507021 which details the spreadsheet headings from the Alliance House Organisations. The full paper records of transferring beneficiaries were not forwarded to the BSO due to Alliance House instructing that this information could not be released.

- 5. Your response at 4(a) states that 3 new beneficiaries have been accepted into the Scheme since 2017, but your response at 5(d) states that 11 applications have been granted and 7 have been refused. How are these number reconciled?**

Granted Applications Response

Please refer to WITN4507006 schedule of applications on the first rule 9 response. Cases 4 – 7 relate to two new registered scheme beneficiaries (non- infected widows) who forwarded applications in relation to their deceased husbands and their bereavement payment entitlement. The other applications granted in relation to cases 1-3 & 8 –11 are original beneficiaries from the Alliance House Organisations.

The third new beneficiary previously received a lump sum payment in respect to their Hepatitis C stage 1 infection in 2005 and no further payments from the Alliance House Organisations. The beneficiary contacted the Northern Ireland Scheme in August 2018 and monthly payments were initiated and backdated subject to verification checks and no application was required except for a completed information form and therefore was not included in the statistics under 5(d)

Declined Applications Response

In relation to applications refused/declined cases 12-14 and 16-18 relate to original beneficiaries from the Alliance House Organisations and case 15 refers to one of the new beneficiary widows who forwarded an S2 application in respect of their late husband which was declined.

- 6. Your response at 4c states that 85 beneficiaries receive ongoing payments – of these, how many receive annual payment versus weekly or monthly payments?**

Of the 85 beneficiaries receiving on going payments none receive weekly payments but all beneficiaries receive an annual winter fuel allowance.

On-going payments are either on a monthly or quarterly basis.

55 are paid on a monthly basis and 30 on a quarterly basis.

Four of the quarterly paid beneficiaries also receive a monthly Income-top up payment.

The decision to be paid monthly or quarterly rests with the beneficiaries

- 7. In respect of your response at 4(d), why have no steps been taken to identify additional beneficiaries?**

Please refer this question to the Northern Ireland Department of Health

- 8. In your response at 5(a), you state that BSO is the decision maker with respect to eligibility for the scheme. Please set out who in BSO makes these decisions and on what basis?**

The decisions makers within the BSO are as follows:

Mrs Wendy Thompson Director of Finance
Mr Simon McGrattan Assistant Director of Finance
Mr Colin Murray Scheme Manager.

The basis for the decisions comes from the DoH Service Level Agreement along with guidance/clarification from the Northern Ireland Department of Health civil servants. The civil servants are as follows

Ms Karen Simpson
Mr Seamus Camplisson

- 9. What policy documents are referred to in your response at 5c? Does BSO or DHNI use policy documents other than the Service Level Agreement in the decision-making process?**

A. For example, the Service Level Agreement states that DHNI is responsible for granting applications for discretionary payments but does not detail the criteria used?

Please refer this question to the Northern Ireland Department of Health

- B. For example, your response at 2(b) states that BSO “interprets policies in conjunction with DHNI to create the procedures to administer the scheme” Does this mean there are separate BSO policy documents and procedures?**

Please refer to WITN4507022 which is the BSO scheme draft operational procedure document which is based on the service level agreement.

- 10. Your response at 5(d) refers to the fact that 7 applications for payments under the Scheme have been refused. 4 of these applications were refused after a second medical opinion was received. Is it common practice for the Scheme to obtain secondary medical opinions for applications? If so, is this done pursuant to a particular policy or procedure set by either BSO or DHNI?**

The BSO will ask for a second medical opinion on applications if the medical professional diagnosis is of a complex technical nature and requires another clinician(s) to interpret the diagnosis. This is a procedure set by BSO due to the lack of medical expertise within the Finance Directorate.

- 11. Your response at 6(a) purports to attach a spreadsheet of payments made to beneficiaries at WITN4507014 but the attached spreadsheet list levels of payments rather than a list of payment made? If so, please provide a copy of this document.**

Please refer to WITN4507023 for all payments made from October 2017 to March 2018

Please refer to WITN4507024 for all payment made from April 2018 to December 2018

- 12. In respect of your response at 6(d), there is a significant increase in quarterly payments between the October – December 2017 and the January – March 2018 (nearly £70,000) Does this reflect the introduction of the additional 3 beneficiaries into the Scheme?**

The reason for the increase in expenditure from October – December 2017 to January – March 2018 is due to no monthly payments being made to beneficiaries by the BSO in October 2017 as the Alliance House Organisations processed the October 2017 payment. Furthermore beneficiaries who receive payments on a quarterly basis received their first payment from the BSO in January 2018 rather than October 2018 as this payment was processed by the Alliance House Organisations.

13. There is very little public information about the policies of and payments made by the Scheme. In particular, there does not appear to be a public document that sets out the Scheme's payment rates. Why is this the case?

Information is contained on the Northern Ireland Direct website and the BSO website. Any information published regarding the Scheme's payment rates must first be agreed with the Northern Ireland Department of Health. Please refer this question to the Northern Ireland Department of Health.

14. Please provide copies of 10 applications which have been granted and copy of all those applications which have been declined since the establishment of the Scheme, together with any decision making or explanatory materials in respect of each

Please refer to Exhibit WITN4507025 & WITN4507026 in relation to granted applications

Please refer to Exhibit WITN4507027 in relation to declined applications

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed

GRO-C: Liam McIvor

Dated

23 November 2022

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number
	October 2017 to March 2018 quarterly summary	WITN4507017
	April to June 2018 quarterly summary	WITN4507018
	July to September 2018 quarterly summary	WITN4507019
	October to December 2018 quarterly summary	WITN4507020
	Alliance House Organisations spreadsheet headings	WITN4507021
	Draft Procedure Document	WITN4507022
	All payments made from October 2017 – March 2018	WITN4507023
	All payments made from April 2018 – December 2018	WITN4507024
	Granted applications	WITN4507025
	Granted applications	WITN4507026
	Declined applications	WITN4507027