

Witness Name: Martin Bell  
Statement No: WITN4728040  
Exhibits: WITN4728041-42  
Dated: 14 May 2021

## **INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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### **WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARTIN BELL**

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 7 May 2021.

I, Martin Bell, will say as follows: -

**1. During the assessment of applications by SIBSS, where is external advice, such as legal advice or policy advice relating to an application, recorded, if it is not included in the individual beneficiary file?**

1.1 During the assessment of applications by SIBSS any external advice relating to a specific application is filed within the beneficiary / applicant's file. In the case of any external legal advice or policy advice relating to the Scheme in general, this is filed on an electronic filing system, under SIBSS, within NHS NSS's Business Classification System (BCS).

**2. Are records kept of Appeals Panel meetings?**

2.1 Yes, minutes for all Appeals panel meetings are kept.

**a. If so, please provide copies of any meetings that took place since April 2017.**

2.2 Minutes of all Appeal Panel meetings held to consider appeals have been submitted to the Inquiry under previous Rule 9 submissions. The Appeal Panel has met on one occasion to discuss internal matters. Minutes from that meeting are attached for completeness [WITN4728041].

**b. What are the names, roles, titles and experience of the panel members?**

2.3 Names, roles, titles and experience of Appeal panel members are included in the Annex to SIBSS Guidance for Appeals V1.5 (Final) attached [WITN4728042].

**c. How was the layperson in Scotland chosen?**

2.4 I have no direct knowledge of how the lay person in Scotland was chosen as I was not in this role at that time. However, I have been advised by David Knowles, the Director for SIBSS at the time, that he appointed the lay person after seeking input from members of the SIBSS Advisory Group as representatives of the interest organisations, e.g. SIBF, Haemophilia Scotland and Hepatitis Scotland. The person eventually chosen was already a lay member of the CHI Advisory Group, a national information governance group also administered by NHS NSS and had extensive experience as a patient advocate. Going forward we have established links with colleagues in Health Improvement Scotland Community Engagement who are able to give advice and guidance on recruitment of lay members. We will recruit in line with new guidance set out for recruiting onto the Appeals Panel; a document previously submitted to the Inquiry. The views of the Advisory Group will also be taken into consideration.

**3. Would a statement prepared for the purposes of the Infected Blood Inquiry be accepted as evidence that an individual was infected with HIV or HCV via NHS blood or blood products in lieu of medical records?**

3.1 In accordance with SIBSS guidance, all information submitted by an applicant must be considered in the course of SIBSS's decision making process, along with any other evidence the SIBSS team can access. The attach also makes clear that medical records are not the only evidence relied upon by SIBSS when reaching a decision.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 14 May 2021

**Table of exhibits:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes/Description</b>	<b>Exhibit Number</b>
19 June 2020	Minutes of the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme Appeal Guidance meeting, held on 19 June 2020.	WITN4728041
	SIBSS Guidance for Appeals V1.5 (Final)	WITN4728042