

Witness name: The Scottish Infected Blood Forum

Statement No.: WITN7165001

Exhibits: WITN7165002-015

Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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**EXHIBIT WITN7165009**

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## **DWP Working Group on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood**

### **Proposed Agenda Items for Outstanding Business**

**August 2019**

1. Disregard arrangements: to sign off the updated, consolidated guidance for claimants, front-line DWP staff and the schemes on the approved disregard policy for finance support scheme payments related to benefit entitlement for infected blood victims across all parts of the UK.
2. Working Tax Credits: to be updated on inter-departmental liaison in respect of disregard arrangements similar to those for benefit entitlement.
3. Condition Insight Reports: to agree the content and drafting of DWP Condition Insight Reports for Bleeding Disorders, and separately for Infected Blood victims and carers.
4. Warning letter: to sign off an agreed final version of the warning letter.
5. Interviews Under Caution: to call for examples from the cohort and develop these into case studies as a pre-cursor to issuing updated guidance.
6. Benefits for Carers of Infected Blood Victims: to open up a DWP policy area not previously explored at any length relating to support for carers (spouses, partners, parents, children, etc.) of the cohort.
7. Suspending reassessments: to allow the Working Group to consider and respond to the justification for the decision not to support the suspension of reassessments during the period of the Inquiry.
8. Cabinet Office: to be updated on Sarah Newton's commitment to speak with the Cabinet Office about allocating parliamentary time to pre-emptively initiate primary legislation to allow 'passporting' (or a less contentious expression) of benefit entitlements for people infected and affected by the contaminated blood scandal.
9. Light-Touch Reviews: to allow the Working Group to contribute to this very relevant development within the broader context of DWP policies and procedures.
10. ESA & PIP Alignment Proposals: to allow the Working Group to contribute to this very relevant development within the broader context of DWP policies and procedures.
11. Financial Support/Compensation Uplift Request from Inquiry Chair: to allow the Working Group to understand and explore the recent developments and ramifications around this activity involving Jackie Doyle-Price (Junior Minister at the DHSC) in the context of wider support and benefit issues, including clarifying the distinctiveness between that issue and the Working Group's sphere of influence.
12. Latest Developments: to update the Working Group on relevant policy and practice developments since the last meeting.

13. Review: to review the Working Group's impacts to date, and renew/update the Group's aims and objectives as required.

Since these were originally submitted, additional topics have been added to the list of unfinished business, including:

- a. Transfer to PIP: from DLA including ongoing issues
- b. Transfer to Scotland: new benefit devolution
- c. Complaints: unhelpfully vague communications
- d. Money having to be paid back: including use of warning letters and interviews under caution
- e. Decision-maker knowledge: the need for updating front-line staff on the rare conditions and circumstances.