

Witness Name: Rishi Sunak  
Statement No.: WITN7712001  
Exhibits: None  
Dated: 4th July 2023

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## **INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

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### **WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE RIGHT HON RISHI SUNAK MP, PRIME MINISTER**

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9(1) and (2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 5 June 2023.

I, Rishi Sunak, will say as follows: -

1. Whilst I have held various roles with government, I have been asked questions relating to my time as Chancellor of the Exchequer ("CX") and as Prime Minister ("PM"). I was CX from 13 February 2020 until 05 July 2022. I became PM on 25 October 2022.
2. I have prepared this witness statement with support from the Government Legal Department, Cabinet Office and His Majesty's Treasury ("HMT") colleagues have assisted in providing relevant documents to me, where such documents exist.
3. I cannot recall giving consideration to the question of compensation for people infected and affected by the use of infected blood and blood products during my time as CX, nor have I been provided with any documents which suggest that such consideration was given. I have been made aware of documents

**WITN5665005** and **EIBS0000705** which are letters dated 13 July 2020 and 21 September 2020 from the Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP in her role as Paymaster General. It is unclear as to whether I saw either of these letters. It is not uncommon for correspondence addressed to ministers to be reviewed/filtered by their staff and it is my understanding that the first letter from Penny Mordaunt was reviewed by my staff and considered to be 'for information' rather than something which required a response from me. I understand that a holding response was sent in response to the second letter and I do not know if anything else happened thereafter.

4. I have been asked when I first gave consideration as PM to the question of compensation. I cannot recall exactly when I first considered this, but as PM I receive regular updates on various ongoing matters across government and I understand that work is underway across government and is being conducted by the Rt Hon Jeremy Quin MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office ("MCO") and Paymaster General, which includes chairing a Small Ministerial Group ("SMG") with HMT and the Department for Health and Social Care ("DHSC") colleagues. I understand that the SMG was set up to consider the compensation framework study of Sir Robert Francis KC and the second interim report of the Chair to this inquiry. The MCO would be able to provide further information in respect of the SMG and its work but I can say that the government is committed in responding to this inquiry's final report when it is published and I understand that work is underway across government to ensure that a substantial response on a full compensation scheme can be included. I am aware of the complexities of preparing an adequate compensation scheme, including the likely need for primary legislation. As is the usual process for managing policy decisions, this work is being led by other Ministers and I will be sighted in relation to the scope of the scheme and intended response at the appropriate stage when they have a formal set of recommendations to make based on their expertise.
5. I can only imagine the impact of waiting for recognition of individual losses on those infected and affected by the use of infected blood and blood products. As other PM's have said it is a tragedy which should not have happened and we must right the wrong. The interim payments were made as quickly as possible

and my government is taking every step to prepare to respond appropriately to the inquiry's final report.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed 

GRO-C

Dated 4/7/23