

Thursday 9 June 2005

PQ00481

2005/2006

Written Answer

Han Ref:

Vol 435

Thursday 16 June 2005

Col 640W

HEPATITIS C

366 Mr Edward O'Hara (Lab. Knowsley South):

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the reason was for the decision not to pay the same level of compensation to the widows and dependants of those who have died from hepatitis C contracted from contaminated blood products administered under the NHS the same level of compensation paid to widows and dependants of those who have died from HIV/AIDS contracted similarly. [3394]

CAROLINE FLINT

I refer the hon. Member to the reply my hon. Friend, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health (Melanie Johnson) gave on 22 March 2005, *Official Report*. Col. 742W.

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O'Hara, Mr Edward (Labour KNOWSLEY SOUTH):

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SUGGESTED REPLY

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GRO-C
CF

15/06

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SUGGESTED REPLY

I refer the Hon member to the reply we gave on 22 March 2005, (*Official Report*. Col.742W)

Background

1. This is the second question this year that Edward O'Hara has asked on the hepatitis C ex-gratia payment scheme. This PQ draws comparisons between the Skipton Fund and the more generous Macfarlane Trust to demonstrate that those with hepatitis C are being treated unfairly.
2. The basis of the two schemes is distinct and they are designed to fulfil different purposes. The Macfarlane Trust is a charitable trust providing on-going support for victims and their families whilst the Skipton Fund is a one-off ex gratia scheme designed to financially assist those living with hepatitis C. No widows are included under the Skipton Fund on the grounds that it is not compensation for bereavement and that it is prohibitively expensive.
3. The reply therefore refers to the previous answer given (PQ03061 Han Ref: Vol 432, Col 742W), which identified the distinction between the Skipton Fund and the Macfarlane/Eileen Trusts. See below.
4. The Macfarlane Trust was set up to assist haemophilia patients infected with HIV/AIDS through contaminated blood products and the Eileen Trust was set up to assist patients infected with HIV/AIDS through blood transfusion.

22 Mar 2005 : Column 742W

Contaminated Blood Products

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons financial support is not provided to women widowed through the infection of their husbands with hepatitis C from contaminated blood products prescribed for them by the NHS. [223180]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Unlike the Macfarlane and Eileen Trusts, which administer schemes for those infected with HIV, the ex gratia payment scheme for those infected with hepatitis C as a result of national health service treatment with blood or blood products, known as the Skipton Fund, is not a charitable trust.

The Skipton Fund has been designed to make lump sum, ex gratia payments to those living with the hepatitis C virus and has not been designed to compensate for bereavement. For these reasons it is distinct from the HIV payment schemes.

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4. The Macfarlane Trust is . . .

The Eileen Trust is . . .

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PQ00481	2005/2006
Commons Ordinary Written	

Mr Edward O'Hara (Knowsley South): To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the reason was for the decision not to pay the same level of compensation to the widows and dependants of those who have died from hepatitis C contracted from contaminated blood products administered under the NHS the same level of compensation paid to widows and dependants of those who have died from HIV/AIDS contracted similarly. [3394].

For Answer on:	09/06/2005
Notice Paper Date:	08/06/2005
Notice Paper Page:	331
MP (Party):	Edward O'Hara MP (Labour)

DRAFT REPLY TO REACH PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH BY

12:00 Monday 13 June 2005

Zubeda
Happy with answer,
but can you please
expand background
note as per my
m/s comments?

Mark

GRO-C

13/6

Lee,

Can you pl. ask AHS to

use the attached. The reprinted
thanks

GRO-C

PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS UNIT **FINAL MINUTE**

1. Reply approved by:

Name	<i>Ailsa Wight</i>	Building	<i>SKH</i>
		Room	<i>640B</i>
Branch	<i>General Health Protection</i>	Ext	GRO-C
		Date	<i>Xx June 2005</i>

2. Reply composed by:

Name	<i>Zubeda Seedat</i>	Ext	GRO-C
Room	<i>631B</i>	Building	<i>SKH</i>

3. The following special points should be noted: