

Annex A. Letter to accompany release of first tranche of papers

14 June 2007

Mr V Mehan
Secretary to the Independent Public Inquiry
C/o Fentons Solicitors LLP
19 Bloomsbury Square
London
WC1A 2NS

Dear Mr Mehan

**Review of Documentation Relating to the Safety of Blood Products 1970 – 1985
(Non-A, Non-B Hepatitis).**

I wrote to you on the 22nd May enclosing three copies each of the Review and the 56 papers relating to Non-A, Non-B hepatitis. Caroline Flint wrote to Lord Archer of the 22nd May enclosing one copy of the Review and associated papers. In her letter Caroline Flint advised Lord Archer that the Review identified over 4,000 documents that related to haemophilia and plasma products and that we propose to release these in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

These documents are held in 100 registered files, the first 20 which we are now releasing. The order of the files is that in which they were held in the lever arch files, they are not in subject or strict date order. Some of the original documents are in poor condition and legibility can be a problem. I am enclosing four copies of each of these 20 files for Lord Archer's inquiry. Each file is accompanied by an inventory that identifies the subject area, date and category to which it was allocated: HIV/AIDS; self-sufficiency; BPL/NHS re-organisation; hepatitis and hepatitis B; and Other.

Information has been redacted from the attached documents in line with Section 40 (2) of the Act and two documents are exempt from the right of access in line with Section 40 (2) of the Act. This provides that information that constitutes personal data is exempt if its release would breach one of the Data Protection Principles. The first principle requires that processing of personal data must be fair and lawful. The names of individuals (from both the Department of Health and external stakeholders) have been redacted where their involvement with these matters was prior to 1990, as we have concluded that to release them after this period of time would be unfair.

Three of the attached documents are, in part, exempt from the right of access in line with Section 31 of the Act (information the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of a crime) and Section 38 of the Act (information the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or the safety of any individual). These are detailed plans of premises that have been removed from each of the three papers.

These papers will also be placed on our website but you will appreciate that the scanning and loading of these documents will take some time (we estimate about two weeks).

Yours sincerely

Linda Page
Project Manager
Blood Policy