



St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
T: 0300 244 4000

Dan Farthing
hello@haemophilia.scot

Our Reference: 202000089439

13 October 2020

Dear Dan

Thank you for your letter of 16 September 2020. As you know, the Scottish Government remains committed to supporting those infected and affected by infected NHS blood and blood products as we recognise that what happened was a terrible tragedy.

In relation to Haemophilia Scotland's grant, you will appreciate that the Scottish Government's budget is unfortunately very stretched, which does mean that we cannot provide funding for all those charities and other bodies looking for support or funding at the levels bodies would ideally like. Therefore I appreciate that you would be keen to get additional financial support; however Haemophilia Scotland does receive more financial support than other bodies working in this area across the UK. Officials, in agreement with the Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing Joe FitzPatrick, did work to ensure with colleagues that the £25,000 you bid for was set aside for you within the Infected Blood budget. I also understand Haemophilia Scotland was successful in bidding for support through the Wellbeing Fund to support your members in relation to Covid-19. While the standard terms and conditions of Scottish Government grant funding can appear restrictive, I understand that they have not caused any particular issues for Haemophilia Scotland in the past and these same conditions apply to all Scottish Government grants. The Scottish Government is of course happy to work with organisations to tailor the requirements to fit projects, where this is considered appropriate. The grant requirements or how the funding is to be spent can also be changed in-year if requested in writing and agreed by the Scottish Government.

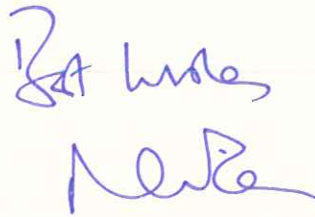
In relation to the Infected Blood Inquiry, I am grateful for your support in helping ensure that the Inquiry understands the benefits of the approach taken in Scotland and the need for flexibility for the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme (SIBSS) to be able to meet the needs of Scottish beneficiaries. I can assure you that the Scottish Government will of course continue to seek to retain control of funding decisions. Whilst, in response to Sir Brian Langstaff's previous call for parity, Joe FitzPatrick has indicated that he is happy to explore with the other UK nations how to increase parity between the UK schemes, he has been clear that the Scottish Government would want to retain flexibility to respond to Scottish

priorities and circumstances. Officials of the four devolved nations have been working together with Cabinet Office officials to consider how parity could be increased. However we have not, as yet, had any direct contact with the Paymaster General. Nor has the Scottish Government been party to discussions about the framework for compensation that you mention in your letter.

We understand that the Cabinet Office is liaising with the Treasury about potential additional funding, but this is still ongoing. The devolved administrations have asked for greater clarity on when a meeting can take place between Ministers from the four UK nations to ensure we can be kept updated on progress and feed in our views. However, I can reassure you that, if additional funding is made available by Treasury, Joe FitzPatrick will of course want to consult Haemophilia Scotland and the Scottish Infected Blood Forum before confirming how any extra funds for SIBSS should be allocated.

Finally, I am pleased to hear that you have raised over £30,000 for the memorial to the infected blood tragedy. Both myself and my Ministerial colleagues would of course be keen to support the erection of the memorial as a suitable tribute and reminder. I hope that you are able to find a suitable location for this.

I am sure that Joe FitzPatrick would be happy to meet you in due course to discuss these issues in more detail, particularly to ensure you are kept engaged in any further discussions around the progress of discussions around increasing parity.



NICOLA STURGEON