



The Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

26 July 2024

Dear *Bill and John.*

I am writing to you as the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with responsibility for the Government's response to the Infected Blood Inquiry. I wanted to take the time to reach out to you as an important representative in the infected blood community to introduce myself personally and set out my intentions for working with the community to ensure that justice is delivered as quickly as possible.

The publication of the Infected Blood Inquiry's final report was an incredibly profound moment for our country, the British State and everyone in the infected blood community. I commend the excellent work that Sir Brian Langstaff and his team did for the duration of the Inquiry.

As I said in Parliament on 21 May, one of the most powerful conclusions in this report is that an apology is meaningful only if it is accompanied by action. The Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer, has committed to compensating the victims of the infected blood scandal and I intend to deliver on this commitment.

Delivering justice, including compensation quickly to the infected blood community is one of my driving principles - the community has waited too long to see this happen. The Victim and Prisoners Act 2024 requires the Government to make regulations to establish a compensation scheme by 24 August 2024.

I welcomed the appointment of Sir Robert Francis as the interim chair of the Infected Blood Compensation Authority, and I am incredibly grateful for the work he has done to seek your views on the proposed compensation scheme. I will carefully consider the recommendations of Sir Robert's report before finalising the form of the compensation scheme, on the basis of the proposal put forward by the previous Government. I am also reassured by his progress in setting up the Infected Blood Compensation Authority, and the care being taken to develop a transparent, compassionate and approachable organisation for beneficiaries.

I recognise that there is a lot of concern and anxiety in the community at the moment around the finalisation of the compensation scheme and transition of Government. Please

be reassured that this is a priority for me, and I will ensure there is no undue delay or unfairness in the delivery of compensation and justice.

This is why I am pleased to update you on the delivery of payments of £100,000 to estates of the deceased infected people. This applies to people who were registered with existing or former support schemes before 17 April 2024 for deaths not yet recognised, where previous interim payments have not already been made to an infected person or their bereaved partners. I can confirm that applications for these payments will open in October. The Government will set out further details in due course.

For me, the Government's response to the other recommendations, beyond compensation, are just as important. I intend to give attention to these, in particular the consideration of appropriate and fitting memorials, in due course.

For all the families impacted we must restore the sense that this is a country that can rectify injustice, particularly when carried out by institutions of the state.

I look forward to working with members of the community over the coming months.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Thomas-Symonds'.

**Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General**