

Ministear airson Slàinte Phoblach is Slàinte  
Bhoireannach  
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28 June 2024

Dear Clare,

I am writing to provide the Committee with an update following the statement to the Scottish Parliament made by the First Minister on 21 May in response to the publication of the Infected Blood Inquiry's (IBI's) final report. During the course of that statement, the First Minister committed to ensuring that Parliament was provided with further information when it was available, particularly in relation to the payment of compensation.

I can now inform the Committee that further interim infected blood compensation payments of £210,000 were paid out on 24 June to each infected person currently registered with the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme (SIBSS). 459 such payments were made by SIBSS to beneficiaries in Scotland this week. These payments, as was the case with the first interim compensation payments of £100,000 to infected people and bereaved partners in October 2022, were made by National Services Scotland, of which SIBSS is a part, acting under direction from Scottish Ministers and with funds provided by the UK Government. The UK scheme document confirming eligibility for interim compensation payments can be found here: [Infected Blood Interim Compensation Payment Scheme: Further Interim Payments - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infected-blood-interim-compensation-payment-scheme-further-interim-payments)

As you know, the Scottish Government has said it supports the case for compensation for those infected with hepatitis or HIV by NHS blood products or blood transfusions. That is why we and SIBSS staff worked at pace, including with the other Four Nations'

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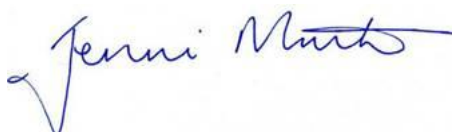
Governments, to make further interim compensation payments to infected people across the UK as quickly as possible following the announcement by the UK Government on 21 May of details of the final UK Infected Blood Compensation Scheme. As was noted previously by the First Minister, the IBI's recommendations will be considered in detail at the new Scottish Oversight and Assurance Group, whose membership includes Haemophilia Scotland and the Scottish Infected Blood Forum, and which first met on 26 June. I can assure you that I am personally committed to this work and will ensure that we do all we can to learn the lessons contained in the IBI's final report.

Much still needs to be done to ensure that final compensation is paid out to all of the victims of the infected blood tragedy. The UK Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 makes provision for the setting up of the new Infected Blood Compensation Authority (IBCA) and also contains provision to make interim compensation payments to estates, to ensure that the families of those who have sadly died, who have so far received little or no support, can receive interim compensation as soon as possible. The Scottish Government is working with the UK Government and other devolved administrations to make preparations for those payments. However, as in some cases estate representatives will need to secure confirmation from the court if they have not already done so, and as there is a need for the Department for Work and Pensions to amend its Regulations in order to ensure these interim compensation payments do not affect people's means-tested benefits, it will unfortunately take a little longer to make payments to estates than it has done to pay existing infected SIBSS members.

The 2024 Act also stipulates that UK Regulations to set up the final compensation scheme must be laid on or before 24 August. Sir Robert Francis, interim chair of the IBCA, is currently consulting with communities and their representatives ahead of the laying of these Regulations. I can assure you that, as this intensive work continues, I am doing all I can to listen to and to represent the views of infected and affected people in Scotland. For example, I have already written to Sir Robert Francis to press that final compensation payments should be made as soon as possible. I have also made robust arguments to both Sir Robert Francis and the UK Government that applications for final compensation from those with Hepatitis B, who have not so far received any support, should be prioritised by the IBCA.

I hope you will find this update useful ahead of the summer recess and I will provide a further update as soon as more information is available.

Yours sincerely,



**Jenni Minto MSP**

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