
Cross-Party Group Minutes

Meeting Minutes

Cross Party Group Title:	Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood
Date of Meeting:	7/7/21
Location:	Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

Name:	Title:
Rhun ap Iorwerth MS	Member of the Senedd
Hefin David MS	Member of the Senedd
Altaf Hussain MS	Member of the Senedd
Mark Isherwood MS	Member of the Senedd
Heledd Roberts	Support Staff – Rhun ap Iorwerth MS
Jill Purvis	Support Staff – Huw Irranca Davies MS
Andrew Bettridge	Support Staff – John Griffiths MS
Ryland Doyle	Support Staff – Mike Hedges

External attendees : L. Atkinson, R Burton, Helen Cook, Kirk Ellis, Sybil Fowler, Jan Goldsworthy, Meinir Gooch, Norman and Jennifer Hutchinson, Michael Imperato, Evelyn James, Jane Jones, Tom and Janet Jones, Lynne Kelly, Tony Lane, Marcus

Lewis, Brian Longford, Ruth Major, Nigel Miller, Janet Morgan, Michael O’Connell, Lucy O’Brien, Paul Powell, , Gill Purnell, Rose Richards, Megan Rogers, Bev Tumelty, Gerald Stone, Craig Sugar, Pat and Tony Summers, David Thomas, Heather Toms, Christine and Jason Williams.

Apologies:

Name:	Title:
Delyth Jewell MS	Member of the Senedd
Christine Fox, Mary Grindley, Christian Howells, Sharon John, Mike O’Driscoll, Sue Sparkes, Lloyd Williams	

Summary of Meeting:

The meeting opened with nominations for reforming the CPG following the Assembly elections. Mick Antoniw’s appointment as Counsel General at the Assembly means that he can no longer Chair the Group and he was thanked for his contribution to the CPG.

Rhun ap Iorwerth was nominated and voted in as Chair. Hefin David was nominated and voted in as Vice Chair. It was agreed that Lynne Kelly Haemophilia would continue to provide the Secretariat to the Group.

Lynne Kelly updated the CPG on the recent Infected Blood Inquiry Hearing. The Inquiry will continue to hear evidence until the end of 2021.

In May evidence had been heard from Health Ministers Vaughn Gething, Matt Hancock and their counterparts in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

In June campaigners from around the UK had been called to give evidence with Lynne Kelly giving evidence on behalf of Haemophilia Wales.

Jenni Richards Inquiry Counsel presented on evidence from the smaller Haemophilia Centres across the UK. Members of Haemophilia Wales living in North Wales had specifically asked for evidence to be heard from Liverpool including Alderhey and this had proved to be of particular interest to the group as some patients from North Wales had received care from Liverpool and Manchester Haemophilia Haemophilia centres.

Evidence was also heard from staff and ex pupils of Treloars school in Hampshire where 72 Haemophiliacs had died from infected blood.

From 19th -29th evidence will be heard from Government decision makers at the time, Dr Diana Walford Principal Medical Officer at the Department of Health, Lord Simon Glenarthur and Lord Ken Clarke who were Health Ministers during the Aids crisis. There has been a huge demand for spaces at the Inquiry and only a small number had received confirmation that they could attend.

Michael Imperato partner at Watkins and Gunn provided an update on the Sir Robert Francis Compensation framework study, announced by Penny Mordaunt Paymaster General and Minister responsible for the Inquiry . This study is completely separate to the Infected Blood Inquiry and has been commissioned by the UK Government. Michael reminded everyone that the focus must remain on Sir Brian Langstaff's recommendations but, it was important to engage with Sir Robert to ensure as many Welsh infected and affected people had their views heard. It is important that the ongoing devolved funding issues are resolved for the future. A questionnaire had been circulated by Watkins and Gunn asking for feedback on compensation. The group felt that a joint submission was important as it had worked previously in ensuring a Judge led Inquiry and Welsh voice. People felt that the compensation framework should be as wide as possible to ensure that the impact on family and carers was covered. Many had died and surviving family members needed to be considered by Sir Robert within the framework of compensation. It was noted that a separate submission would be sent by the Group to Sir Brian Langstaff later in the year regarding the Infected Blood Inquiry recommendations.

Action: It was agreed that a joint submission from Haemophilia Wales and the Cross Party Group should be sent to Sir Robert Francis by 26th July regarding the Terms of Reference for the Framework of compensation.

Altaf Hussain MS and ex surgeon reminded the group that blood was contaminated prior to devolution, this was an international problem and responsibility remained with Central Government.

Kirk Ellis highlighted the lack of progress levelling up Infected Blood payments since Vaughn Gething's announcement on 25th March. Scotland had already made payments but Welsh victims are still waiting and this is causing additional stress and financial hardship. Hefin David MS confirmed that he had written to Welsh Government on 1st July highlighting the issues, he is yet to receive a reply. Lynne Kelly confirmed that Welsh Government had confirmed they were negotiating the finer points of the scheme with the UK Governments but there was still no date for payments being made.

Action : It was agreed that the Cross Party Group would write again to reiterate Hefin David's request for payments to be made quickly.

Norman Hutchinson and Tom Jones raised concerns about Sir Robert Francis compensation framework study and whether this was an attempt by Government to undermine Sir Brian and to pay as little as possible to victims by 'forensic examination of finances'.

Victims have little faith in the UK Government initiative due to past experiences and it was hoped that Sir Brian would have the final say. Michael Imperato confirmed that Sir Brian would be calling Sir Robert Francis to give evidence to the Inquiry on his compensation framework study.

Jessica Morden MP Newport East had arranged for her constituents to meet with Penny Mordaunt. Jessica is Vice Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood at Westminster.

Action : Haemophilia Wales to invite Diana Johnson and Jessica Morden to the next Cross Party Group meeting (Date TBC).

No further issues were raised, Rhun Ap Iorwerth thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was brought to a close at 1.25pm when Members of the Senedd returned to the Chamber.