

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/03352/18

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

7 November 2018

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition No P-05-831 concerning unfairness and discrimination in relation to financial support for those affected by infected blood and their families.

I am very grateful to you for bringing to my attention the various examples provided by the petitioners.

I would reiterate that since each of the four UK countries adopted different scheme arrangements, it has been difficult to establish a consistent and equitable UK approach and model for support payments.

In particular, the recent adoption in England of the Special Category Mechanism (SCM) and, even more recently, the new approach adopted in Scotland, has heightened this sense of inequity regarding certain aspects of the different support schemes operating across the UK. As I previously explained, the Welsh Infected Blood Support Scheme (WIBSS) does offer a more balanced and holistic package of support to its beneficiaries compared to that available through some of the other UK schemes.

However, I recognise that beneficiaries in Wales should not be significantly financially worse off than those elsewhere in the UK. My officials are continuing to prepare options for scheme benefits that could include enhanced support for Stage 1 beneficiaries experiencing additional complications, alongside wider ongoing work to review the current discretionary payments framework. The aim is to achieve greater transparency and equitable award criteria, while committing that no existing beneficiary will be worse off.

We will keep all scheme beneficiaries promptly informed of any changes to the WIBSS arising from this review.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Thank you again for writing on this matter. I hope you have found my reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

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Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services