

Our Ref: DLH/DLH/CB/C626/041

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Dear Ms Johnson

**RE: Proposed compensation framework**

In the last 24hrs or so we have been made aware of correspondence addressed to you from Mr Neil Bateman, dated 7 April 2021 which unfortunately contains a number of misrepresentations concerning our position vis-à-vis the proposed “... *framework for compensation* ...” referred to by Penny Mordant in her statement to the House on 25 March 2021.

I therefore wish to put on record our true concern over the existing voluntary payments scheme, to which I alluded briefly to in a recent BBC interview.

As I said on air: “*Voluntary and charitable payments will come to an end. That must be positive news.*”

The positivity to which I referred was the potential for contaminated blood victims to, at last, benefit from a properly particularised damages award rather than continuing to rely on a voluntary payments scheme that is in effect charity handed out to some victims at the whim of the prevailing government minister and which, as you are aware, could be subject to amendment, reduction or indeed removal at any juncture.

We are aware of anxiety within the community that any compensation award may jeopardise the voluntary payments on which many currently rely. It should go without saying that that we would never advise any of our clients (either collectively or individually) to agree to any proposal which did not put them in a better financial position than that in which they find themselves today. Ill-informed speculation, however well meaning, based on flawed assumptions criticising our approach does not help our clients’ cause.

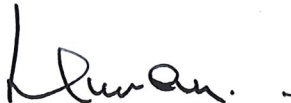
Without wishing to go into too much detail at this stage, I would point out that for a number of years the law has allowed damages in these circumstances to be paid by way of periodical payments and similarly the law is well developed in assessing those benefits which should or should not be

taken into account when quantifying compensation. Naturally, given our lengthy experience in the field of personal injury compensation, we are adept at working with the relevant parties to bring about long lasting and deserved recompense for people in similar situations. These are precisely the areas in which we are experts and will engage with our clients individually before any submissions whatsoever are made to the independent reviewer once appointed.

In short, we are pleased the government recently announced its intention, following considerable lobbying underpinned by our group legal action, to set up an appropriate compensation framework. Again, and without wishing to pre-determine matters, this must not be a one-size fits all/take it or leave it solution but one which is individually tailored to each client's situation, circumstance and need.

If you should receive any other direct correspondence which in any way misstates our efforts to sensibly move this matter forward, we would be only too happy to help set the record straight directly with you. After such a lengthy battle, misinformation does nothing to assist our clients in their brave efforts to achieve the outcome for which they have waited for so long.

Yours sincerely



Des Collins

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