



**HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA**

11 July 2017

Dear Colleague,

Re: Contaminated blood inquiry

The contaminated blood tragedy of the '70s and '80s caused unimaginable hardship and pain for those affected. Many of you will have heard this directly from constituents. Indeed a number of colleagues have made powerful representations and supported campaigns for justice. While no government has done more to support victims and families I am pleased to confirm today that we will hold a full inquiry into what happened.

The human cost and scale of this tragedy is vast. Published data and scientific studies have estimated that around 4,700 people with bleeding disorders (such as haemophilia), and around 28,000 other people who were exposed to hepatitis C, as well as around 1,200 people with bleeding disorders and 100 other individuals were infected with HIV through treatment with NHS-supplied blood products or blood transfusions in the UK. Many of those infected with HIV were also infected with hepatitis C. It is impossible to exaggerate the sheer human misery caused by this scandal, and it is of course a particular tragedy that many sufferers have already lost their lives.

We can be proud of our record in support of those who suffered from this injustice to date, both financially and in the search for the truth. We increased the money we spend on payments to victims to record levels with an additional £125 million for those who need it. To date over £390 million has been given in financial support through these schemes. In addition we have published all the information we hold on blood safety from the period, amounting to over 5,500 documents published on the Department of Health website and over 200 files of documents available to the public through the National Archives.

Nonetheless, we also recognise we need to go further. Our task now will be to talk with those affected, and their families, working with them to decide the most appropriate form for the inquiry and who should chair it. It is vital their voices are heard, that the inquiry maintains their confidence and that they get the answers they deserve.

Your support in meeting those affected and representing their concerns has been important to the progress we have made so far. I encourage you to continue this engagement and to support this new inquiry as you do so.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Hunt', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Secretary of State for Health**