

Appointment of Sir Robert Francis QC to undertake the infected blood compensation framework study

News story

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The Paymaster General is pleased to announce the appointment of Sir Robert Francis QC to carry out a study which will look at options for a framework for compensation, and to report back to the Paymaster General with recommendations, before the independent Infected Blood Inquiry reports. The terms of reference of this study will be finalised following consultation between Sir Robert and those infected and affected. Further details will be announced shortly.

The study shall provide the Paymaster General with advice on potential options for compensation framework design and solutions for consideration on publication of the inquiry's report.

The Paymaster General said:

"Sir Robert will be carrying out this study to provide the Government with advice and recommendations on a potential compensation framework. Sir Robert brings his vast legal expertise – including his background and experience in medical ethics and clinical negligence work. He also has experience of chairing public inquiries into issues involving medical negligence. Sir Robert will bring the integrity and thoughtful consideration this review requires."

Sir Robert said:

"I feel privileged to be asked to undertake this review to advise on options for a compensation framework for those who have suffered so grievously from being given defective blood products. I look forward to finding out what

those most closely affected need and what the options might be for a fair and effective compensation scheme.”

Notes to editors:

- Sir Robert Francis, QC is a barrister who before his recent retirement from full time practice at the Bar, specialised in medical law, including medical and mental health treatment and capacity issues, professional discipline, and claims for damages in clinical negligence cases.
- Sir Robert received his knighthood in 2014 for services to healthcare and patients.
- He has acted as chairman of three inquiries into the care and treatment of mental health service users who have committed homicide. He has appeared as counsel for interested parties at a number of public inquiries, including the Bristol Royal Infirmary Inquiry, the Royal Liverpool Children’s Inquiry, and the Neale inquiry. He chaired the two Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust inquiries (reports 2010 and 2013 respectively), and the Freedom to Speak Up Review (report 2015) into the treatment of NHS staff who raise concerns.
- He is now a non-executive director of the Care Quality Commission and is Chair of Healthwatch England, the independent statutory champion of people using healthcare and adult social care services.

Press queries should be directed to Cabinet Office Press Office at pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Anyone who wishes to write to Sir Robert regarding the Compensation Study should email ibcompframeworkstudy@cabinetoffice.gov.uk, rather than contacting Sir Robert directly, but please note that full details of the process for consultation with the infected and affected stakeholders will be announced in due course.

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