

[News story: Infected blood scandal: increased financial support for victims confirmed](#)

The Prime Minister has announced that the government will increase the financial support for those infected and affected by the infected blood scandal ahead of the start of the public hearings today.

Regular annual payments for some of those infected will increase from a total of £46 million to £75 million.

Recipients, including bereaved spouses and partners, could also be eligible for further financial support through means-tested discretionary top-up payments.

Infected blood support schemes were established in 2017, following the publication of the Penrose Inquiry in 2015. Country-specific schemes were set up in Scotland, Wales, England and Northern Ireland. Today's funding is also a recognition of the disparities that have existed across the schemes.

The [England Infected Blood Support Scheme](#) supports people historically infected with hepatitis C or HIV from NHS blood or blood products. It also provides help to families, spouses and civil or long-term partners after the death of someone infected.

Since it began, the scheme has provided enhanced support to those infected and affected by infected blood, with an annual budget of £46.3 million.

In January, Health Minister Jackie Doyle Price and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Lidington, met with the Infected Blood Inquiry team and 12 infected and affected representatives to discuss the need for improved financial support and the desire for equal support across the 4 UK nations.

The Prime Minister said:

The contaminated blood scandal was a tragedy that should never have happened and has caused unimaginable pain and hurt for victims and their families for decades.

The start of the inquiry today is a significant moment for those who have suffered so much for so long, as well as for those who campaigned and fought so hard to make it happen.

I know this will be a difficult time for victims and their families – but today will begin a journey which will be dedicated to getting to the truth of what happened and in delivering justice to everyone involved.

I am pleased that today we are also confirming increased financial support for beneficiaries of the infected blood support scheme in England, from £46 million to £75 million, and making changes so more bereaved beneficiaries will be eligible for additional support.

We have made these changes in response to those who asked us to look again at the support we give to those affected, and as Prime Minister I am determined that the government will continue to listen and to co-operate fully with the Inquiry.

Health Minister Jackie Doyle-Price said:

We've always been clear that all those who have been affected by this tragedy should be supported by a fair and transparent support scheme that focuses on their welfare and long-term independence.

We have continued to follow the Infected Blood Inquiry closely and have considered the issues raised at the initial hearings, and now we are demonstrating that we have listened by committing up to a further £30 million to the scheme.

We have also listened to the call for parity of support across the UK and we are planning to start discussions with our counterparts in the devolved administrations to see how this could be achieved.