



# Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme

## Welcome to issue 13 of the Scottish Infected Blood Support Scheme (SIBSS) Newsletter

### Annual payment increase 6.7% paid from April 2024

The inflationary rate for payments in 2024-25 has been agreed at 6.7%. The rate is set for each financial year based on the rate of CPI for the previous September.

### UK Infected Blood Inquiry Update

The Inquiry's final report was published 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – see link below for full report:

<https://www.infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk/reports/inquiry-report>

Separately, as a result of the new Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, a new **Infected Blood Compensation Authority** (IBCA) has been established to administer the compensation scheme which the Infected Blood Inquiry recommended in 2023 – see the link below for more information about IBCA and the current UK Government proposals for the compensation scheme: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infected-blood-compensation-authority>

Please note you can click on the link to 'register your interest to help shape the service' to receive updates on the compensation scheme and be invited to give feedback. The IBCA has recently sent an email update to those who had already registered; if you would like a copy of this, please let us know. If you don't have internet access, you can instead call the IBCA on 0141 726 2397 to register your interest. Lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

Separately a second interim compensation payment of £210,000 was paid to all infected members in June 2024 on behalf of the UK Government.

### Next Steps

- SIBSS will continue to make monthly payments. From April 2025 going forwards, regular payments received from SIBSS will be taken into account in calculating people's final compensation award.
- The Scottish Government is having ongoing discussions with the UK Government about the future role of SIBSS. They understand that uncertainty about this has been causing anxiety so the Scottish Government wants to ensure the position is agreed and members are updated as soon as possible.
- However, whatever happens no one will see their monthly or quarterly payments stop (unless they opt to receive their compensation as a single lump sum award instead of regular ('periodic') payments). The current discussion is about whether those payments will in future be made by the new IBCA instead of SIBSS.
- Estate claims for £100,000 interim compensation for deceased beneficiaries of the previous UK schemes will be processed by SIBSS as soon as arrangements have been finalised with the UK Government, new DWP benefits regulations are in place and access to the relevant historic data has been made available to SIBSS. Estates already registered with SIBSS will also be able to apply for this payment where no one else has received a £100,000 payment already in relation to a deceased SIBSS beneficiary.

## **Memorial for Infected Blood Victims in Scotland**

The Infected Blood Inquiry has recommended considering providing a memorial in Scotland as well as a UK memorial. Campaigners have already been working hard for a number of years to raise funds and develop a design for a Scottish memorial. The aim of the memorial will be to remember all infected blood victims, including those who have sadly died, and ensure that what happened is not forgotten.

The campaigners include members from both Haemophilia Scotland and the Scottish Infected Blood Forum who have been collaborating on fundraising over the years, although please note that the memorial will be for all infected blood victims, not just individuals with haemophilia. A working group of those who are infected and affected have been consulting on the proposed design and exploring potential locations for the memorial – if you haven't heard from them and would like to find out more please contact Alan Martin of Haemophilia Scotland in the first instance at [alan@haemophilia.scot](mailto:alan@haemophilia.scot).

The Scottish Government is currently contacting organisations, such as Councils, to try to find a suitable public space where the memorial can be located.

## DWP / Benefits Help

If there are any queries relation to your income from DWP, HMRC or your local Council in provide. If you have any problems or you are invited to a formal interview then you may wish to call or email SIBSS staff – they can provide you with a letter to confirm the payments you have received from SIBSS and confirm that these payments should be disregarded.

If your benefits are stopped, we have a Benefits Advisor that can help. Please contact us for more information.

Interim compensation payments (both the £100,000 and £210,000 payments) do not need to be taken into account when calculating your income tax bill, any entitlement to means-tested benefits or financial assessment for charges for those living in residential care, as long as you live in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, [The Post Office Horizon Compensation and Infected Blood Interim Compensation Payment Schemes \(Tax Exemptions and Relief\) Regulations 2023](#) also exempts interim compensation payments from inheritance tax and capital gains tax from 28 October 2022 onwards.


## Psychology Support

The Scottish Infected Blood Psychology Service has been open to referrals since September 2021. Individuals have accessed the service for support with a wide range of concerns, including grief, trauma, low mood, and problems within relationships. Most of our appointments have taken place by telephone or video conferencing, thereby enabling equitable access to the service from a variety of geographical locations. However, face to face contact can be arranged, where needed. Feedback from patients has been very positive.

Our service is based at the Astley Ainslie Hospital in NHS Lothian by staff who have an understanding of the current and historical context of infected blood in the UK. We are aware that many individuals are currently being greatly affected by the ongoing events of the Infected Blood Inquiry. Although the service is hosted by NHS Lothian, it is a Scotland-wide service, and can also be accessed by people who no longer live in Scotland.

The service also has a website: <https://www.sibps.scot.nhs.uk/>. Please see the website for details on how to self-refer to the service. If you have any questions about the service, we can be reached by telephone on 0131 537 9128.

## A Fond Farewell



After 16 years in the NHS and with SIBSS since the beginning, we are wishing a happy retirement to Sally Richards, the scheme manager. We thank her for all her hard work; she will be sadly missed. Wishing her many happy travels ahead.

### **Emails from SIBSS**

If you receive emails from us, can we ask that you periodically check your Junk folders as we have had a couple of messages to say that they seem to be ending up there instead of Inboxes.

### **Did you know?**

- If you do not have access to the internet, or prefer to talk directly, the SIBSS team are happy to give advice and assistance over the phone.
- If you receive a regular payment; you can request a monthly remittance advice to be sent to you.
- You need to inform us if you move address or your circumstances change. See link to change of detail form. [SIBSS Change of Details Form](#)

## **Contact Us**

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