



Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

15 September 2025

Dear Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery,

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to you for accepting the role of Chair of the new Infected Blood Compensation Scheme Technical Expert Group. I am grateful for your leadership and for the commitment you bring to this work.

Following your acceptance of the position of chair, I am writing to set out the Technical Expert Group's remit and the transparency and engagement arrangements that will apply from the outset, in light of the Inquiry's Additional Report of 9 July 2025 and my previous letter.

As I outlined in my statement to Parliament, some of the Inquiry's Additional Report recommendations can be implemented once the relevant legislation is in place. Others will require further technical advice from the new Infected Blood Compensation Scheme Technical Expert Group and public consultation to determine the best way forward.

The Technical Expert Group will assist the Government in developing proposals, in response to the Inquiry's Additional Report, for public consultation. Following that consultation, the Government will be in a position to finalise any changes to the Infected Blood Compensation Scheme, informed by the consultation findings and the Technical Expert Group's advice.

For clarity, the Technical Expert Group will advise on technical, legal and clinical matters; it will not make decisions on policy. The Government will continue to be accountable for the development of policy, and the Government will consult the infected blood community on the issues on which the Technical Expert Group provides advice.

In response to feedback from the Inquiry and the community, I am putting in place a strengthened transparency framework for the new Technical Expert Group. This framework will include the following measures:

- We will publish a revised Terms of Reference that clearly defines the Technical Expert Group's advisory role, scope and ways of working. The Terms of Reference enable the Technical Expert Group, at your discretion, to conduct targeted engagement with key stakeholders on matters within the Inquiry's Additional Report to inform the group's technical advice. This engagement will be supported by a Cabinet Office secretariat and will not delegate the Technical Expert Group's responsibilities or confer membership. Its primary purpose is to enhance the group's understanding of specific technical issues, with outcomes recorded and published.

- The Terms of Reference will also set out the full membership of the Technical Expert Group. The membership of the new Technical Expert Group will include additional expertise in bleeding disorders, transfusion medicine and psychological medicine. The appointments I have made reflect feedback from infected blood community stakeholders. Reflecting on feedback from stakeholders, I will be appointing two psychologists and a psychiatrist to provide expertise in psychological medicine. This broader membership will ensure any changes to the scheme are rigorously assessed by a wider range of expertise.
- We will publish the Technical Expert Group's work programme and the detailed minutes of all meetings. The work programme will set out the specific technical questions on which the Government is seeking advice. This will guide the group's priorities in the leadup to the public consultation period.

These measures are designed to ensure the Technical Expert Group's independence, its remit and work are visible, and its advice is transparently generated and used. They also reaffirm that the role of the Technical Expert Group is to provide impartial clinical, scientific and technical input to inform policy development; it is not a substitute for public consultation, nor does it determine outcomes.

I am grateful for your leadership in chairing this Technical Expert Group and for your commitment to open and rigorous engagement. This letter will be published on GOV.UK and shared with key stakeholders. Officials stand ready to support you and the Technical Expert Group as it begins its work in early September.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Thomas-Symonds', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

**RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL**