

Press Release

Wednesday, 21st September 2005-09-21

Irish Haemophilia Society meets with the Minister for Health and Children

A delegation from the Irish Haemophilia Society today met with the Minister for Health and Children, Tanaiste Mary Harney T.D. at the Department of Health and Children to discuss the future care of people with haemophilia and the role United States pharmaceutical companies played in the infection of the haemophilia community with HIV and Hepatitis C.

During the course of the meeting the Tanaiste confirmed that a U.S legal firm had been retained by the department to investigate the possibility of initiating legal proceedings against pharmaceutical companies in the United States. The department expects a report on the matter within two to three months.

Speaking of the development Irish Haemophilia Society chairman Michael Davenport said, "We have been waiting for this for a long time. Perhaps now our members will get the answers they need to bring closure to a period that has brought them much hurt and suffering.

The Tanaiste also confirmed that funding will be provided as a priority for the provision of a new in-patient facility to be built at National Centre for Hereditary Coagulation Disorders, St. James's Hospital, Dublin. The new 12-bed facility which is now at planning stage will provide comprehensive in-patient care for people with haemophilia.

Haemophilia Society Chairman, Michael Davenport stated that he was delighted that the Minister was able to give a commitment that the new unit would be built as soon as the planning stage had been completed and that it would not be subject to any budgetary constraints.

"This will ensure that in future people with haemophilia will be able to receive urgent treatment 24/7," he added.

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