

PRESS RELEASE

THE IRISH HAEMOPHILIA SOCIETY
Tuesday 3rd June 2003

MINISTER INVITES IRISH HAEMOPHILIA SOCIETY TO MEETING

The Irish Haemophilia Society has been invited to meet with the Minister for Health at 12.00pm on Wednesday 4th June 2003 at Hawkins House, to discuss the serious and unjust ramifications of the Supreme Court Ruling on 26th March in relation to our members' rights to appeal their Hepatitis C Compensation Award to the High Court.

The health of many persons infected with Hepatitis C has deteriorated significantly since the late 1990's. At the time their cases were heard, no provision was made for liver transplants and other medical problems.

At the time, these persons believed they were getting the best deal possible, but the President of the High Court ruled that a cap on provision of awards was wrongly being applied. However, by the time this emerged, the chance for appeal had expired for most persons.

79 of our members who had their cases heard at a particular time have been hit by this anomaly in the Appeal Rules. A number of these members are facing liver transplant and other serious medical situations.

The State has to accept its responsibility in relation to these citizens, and should not be trying to use a technicality to deny them their rights.

Their infection by the State has been a tragedy for all concerned. A tragedy should not be made a travesty through a technicality.

Ends.

For further information contact Michael Davenport, Chairman of the Irish Haemophilia Society on 087 2309909, or Margaret Dunne, Administrator on 01 8724466 / 087 2727183.