HAEMOPHILIA FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA
For all bleeding disorders

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Making your Senate Inquiry submission

23 October 2026

A practical take-home guide for the bleeding disorders community

There is no single right way to write a submission. This guide is designed to help you decide what you want the Committee to understand, organise your thoughts and lodge your submission. You only need to share what you feel comfortable sharing.

INQUIRY	SUBMISSIONS CLOSE	REPORTING DATE
Contaminated blood and blood products	**27 November 2026**	**1 July 2027**

1. Start with the message you want heard

A clear submission can be built around four simple questions:

1	**Your main point**	What is the most important thing you want the Committee to understand?
2	**Your experience or evidence**	What happened, and what information or examples can you share?
3	**The impact**	How has this affected you, your family, carers or the wider bleeding disorders community?
4	**What you would like to see change**	What response, action or outcome would you like the Committee to consider?

2. Connect your experience to the Inquiry

You do not need to cover every Term of Reference. Focus on the parts that connect to your experience and what you want the Committee to understand. You might choose to write about:

- How you were exposed to infected blood or blood products, and what you understand about how this happened.
- What choices you had about treatment products; what you were told about risks; when you became aware of them; and whether that information would have changed your choices.
- Your diagnosis experience, including how you found out and what information or support you were given.
- How governments, health services or other organisations responded, including whether information was openly shared.
- Your experience since the 2004 Senate Inquiry, including the impact of the lack of an apology or further action.
- The health, emotional, practical or other impacts on you, your partner, children, parents or carers.
- Your views on responsibility, acknowledgement, apology, compensation, support or other changes you believe are needed.

For a more detailed list of questions to consider, see HFA's Question Guide on pages 3 and 4.

3. Keep it clear and simple

- Introduce yourself briefly and explain why you are making a submission.
- Use plain language and your own words. You do not need legal or formal language.
- Address some or all of the Terms of Reference.
- Use headings and make your key points easy to find.
- Keep it concise. Senate guidance says submissions are generally no longer than four to five pages; if yours is long, include a brief summary upfront.
- Explain not only the issue, but how you think it could be addressed. Committees look to submissions for ideas when developing recommendations.
- Only attach supporting documents that directly relate to your key points.

Privacy matters

- Most accepted submissions are published on the Committee website with the submitter's name. You can ask for names and/or locations to be withheld. Consider redacting identifying details of others, such as doctors.
- Keep personal contact details out of the main submission and provide them separately.
- If you want your submission to be confidential, clearly mark 'CONFIDENTIAL' on the front, explain why, and keep your name and contact details on a separate page. The Committee considers confidentiality requests and has authority to publish a submission; contact the secretariat before submitting if you are considering a confidential submission.
- Once a submission has been published, it cannot be withdrawn or altered. A supplementary submission can be sent if you need to add or change information.

If you use AI or computer-assisted writing tools: you remain responsible for the accuracy of everything in your submission.
Reference: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/How_to_make_a_submission

4. Lodge your submission

- Go to the Inquiry page and select “Upload Submission”. This will take you to the secure online submission site.
- Sign in to your My Parliament account. If you do not have an account, select “Create an account” and follow the prompts to register, then log in.
- Follow the online prompts and upload your completed submission. If writing is difficult, you can use speech-to-text or dictation to prepare your submission.
- Submit and check your email. If you lodge through the Senate website, you will receive an email straight away confirming the secretariat has received your submission. Keep this email and a copy of your final submission.
- If you cannot submit online, you can send your submission by email to the relevant Committee Secretariat or by post. See the Senate “Making a submission” page for details.

Useful links and contacts

- Inquiry page: Terms of Reference, deadline and upload link
- Senate guide: how to prepare and lodge a submission
- HFA Senate BBV Inquiry Hub: information, updates and support

Committee Secretariat: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au | +61 2 6277 3515
HFA support: Natashia Coco: ncoco@haemophilia.org.au / 0403 538 109
Suzanne O’Callaghan: socallaghan@haemophilia.org.au / 03 9885 7800

Support is available

If the Inquiry affects you in any way, we encourage you to reach out to people close to you, your peers, others affected, or seek professional support, including:

- Your usual counsellor
- Your Haemophilia Treatment Centre social worker, psychologist or counsellor
- Your GP, who can also refer you to counselling
- Lifeline: 13 11 14

Sharing your story: question guide

This guide provides an overview of the questions that you may choose to explore in your submission. This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences in your own words, including what happened, how it has affected you and/or your family, and what you would like the Inquiry to understand.

These questions are a suggested guide. Your submission or the HFA interview conversation may take a different direction depending on what is most important to you. You can skip any questions or topics you don't want to discuss or don't think are as important and adapt them to your own circumstances or evidence you want to highlight.

1. About you

- A short blurb about yourself and your life.
- Are you directly affected, or are you a partner, family member or carer of someone affected?
- What bleeding disorder do you/does or did your family member have, and how severe is or was it?

2. Treatment and exposure

- What was your/your family member's experience of living with a bleeding disorder and receiving treatment during the 1970s and 1980s?
- What do you know about how and when you/your family member acquired a bloodborne virus through treatment?
- What treatment products were you/they receiving at the time, and how often did you/they need them?
- What did you or your family know about the risks at the time?
- Were you or your family involved in decisions about treatment? Were any treatment choices offered?
- Would it have made a difference to your choices/your family's choices if you had known the risks?

3. Finding out

- How and when did you find out that you/your family member had acquired a bloodborne virus (BBV)? How old were you/they?
- What was that like for you and your family?
- What information, support or BBV treatment did you/your family member receive at the time?
- Did this change the way you thought about your/their bleeding disorder treatment product?

4. Impact on your life

- How has this experience affected you and/or your family, including physical health, emotional wellbeing, finances, relationships and quality of life?
- If you/your family member had hep C, is it cured? Are there ongoing health issues with it?
- Did you or your family tell others about the BBV? Has that changed?
- Have you or your family experienced or been concerned about stigma or discrimination?
- How has this experience affected your treatment decisions and/or trust in healthcare services and government?
- Looking back, what do you think could or should have been done differently?

5. Ongoing costs

- Thinking of the above, are there any ongoing out-of-pocket costs or services (of any kind) or support (including peer support) you or your family need to manage the impact of the BBVs?
- Would you access more products, services or support if you could afford them or they were more available?

6. Key messages for the Inquiry Committee

- For you, what is most important for the Inquiry Committee to understand about what happened and its impact on you and/or your family?
- What would you like to see come from the Inquiry, for yourself, your loved one and/or others affected?
- What difference would these outcomes make?

7. Is there anything else you would like to say?

8. Documents or other information

You may wish to include documents relating to your family's experience as part of your submission. HFA can help guide you on what to include, if needed.

It is advised not to include medical records with your submission for privacy reasons – your story will be believed as you tell it. The Secretariat is preparing further guidance on medical records and Inquiry submissions, which HFA will share once available.