

Saskatoon:

Unit 3, 844-51st St. East
Saskatoon, SK S7K 5C7
Tel (306) 975-4725
Toll free (888) 844-8886
Fax (306) 975-4728
vellacott.mp@shawlink.ca

**Ottawa:**

Suite 610, Justice Bldg.
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel (613) 992-1899
Fax (613) 992-3085
Vellacott.M@parl.gc.ca
www.mauricevellacott.ca

HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Vellacott gratified that compensation for hep C victims is now assured

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SASKATOON – Saskatoon-Wanuskewin MP Maurice Vellacott, who served as an Official Opposition Party health critic when the issue was first before Parliament in the the late nineties, has been vocal ever since that Canada’s government should reach an agreement to compensate individuals infected with hepatitis C through Canada’s blood supply in the pre-1986/post-1990 period. Vellacott sees the framework agreement announced yesterday as a major step toward that end and the partial fulfillment of a key Conservative commitment on this longstanding issue.

Vellacott says, “I am most pleased that we have reached an agreement on the fundamental elements of a final settlement for those who contracted hepatitis C through Canada’s blood supply before 1986 and after 1990.”

Vellacott added, “Once the settlement is finalized and has been approved by the Courts, the federal government will place nearly \$1 billion into a trust fund to provide compensation for all members of the pre-1986/post-1990 class who were infected by hepatitis C through Canada’s blood supply.”

Vellacott emphasizes, “Because these victims have waited long enough for what is due to them, our government is going to do everything in its power to ensure that matters are moved ahead as quickly as possible. The pre-1986/post-1990 class will receive compensation based on the federal share of parity with the 1986-1990 class.”

Vellacott remarked, “As I understand it, benefits will be paid on a present-value basis with class members receiving the entire sum of their compensation up front, based on such factors as current disease level and probability of disease progression.”

Vellacott conceded, “While this framework agreement is a major step, further steps must be completed before payment to the class; this includes drafting the final settlement agreement, receiving Court approvals and setting up an application approval process.” As to the payment timeline, Vellacott acknowledged that, “The federal government cannot control the timing of all aspects of these final steps; however, it is committed to doing everything in its power to complete the final steps so that class members receive payment as quickly as possible.”

– 30 –

For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or (306) 975-4728