

5 If a husband catches AIDS then his doctor should tell the wife, says MP

DOCTORS treating husbands for AIDS should break their rule of secrecy and tell the patients' wives, a former Health Minister said yesterday.

'The woman had a right to know,' declared Sir Gerard Vaughan, Tory MP for Reading East.

Pointing out that the wives could be at risk, he added: 'The preservation of life should supersede the question of confidentiality.'

His argument — set out in a letter to the present Minister, Mr Barney Hayhoe — will be resisted, however,

By ALAN YOUNG

by the Government's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Donald Acheson.

Dr Acheson has insisted that wives should not be told unless their husbands give permission. He believes that information about AIDS, as with other sexually-transmitted diseases, must be strictly confidential to encourage sufferers to seek help.

One London specialist said last night: 'Confidentiality is crucial to

contain the spread of the disease.'

A spokesman for the AIDS-counselling, Terence Higgins Trust, said: 'We agree with Dr Acheson irrespective of the circumstances.'

Sir Gerard, once a consultant paediatrician at Guy's Hospital, urged Minister to reconsider their controversial decision not to make AIDS notifiable.

He said: 'It would be unthinkable for a doctor to treat notifiable diseases like meningitis or typhoid without telling a person's family that they are at risk.'

'The public need to be reassured. There is a great deal of anxiety and

panic about the extent of AIDS in this country.'

His letter warned that the Health Service could be liable to legal action by haemophiliac children who contract AIDS after transfusions of infected blood.

Sir Gerard also demanded that hospitals inform their workers whenever an AIDS patient is admitted so that precautions can be taken.

© British actor John Allison, who appeared with the Royal Shakespeare Company and then on the American stage with Richard Chamberlain in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, has died of AIDS in Los Angeles. He was 48.

THE Sun

So cruel¹⁹

YOUR report (The Sun, September 23) gives the impression haemophiliacs are spreading AIDS.

This is wrong and also cruel because these people suffer enough already. People are born with haemophilia. Their blood doesn't clot and they have injections to keep them alive.

Now they are taking a gamble with their lives every time they have an infection.

Haemophiliacs have enough to worry about without people spreading malicious accusations.

Name and address supplied.

THE Sun

Dying AIDS man 'a hero'

A DYING road crash victim was hailed a hero yesterday—after he warned rescuers that he was an AIDS carrier.

Police and ambulance men donned masks and gloves to treat the unnamed 25-year-old motorcyclist—but he died.

An AIDS specialist in Brisbane, Australia, said: 'I'm not surprised he thought of others in his last moments. He was a very unselfish man.'

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