

Institute of Cancer Research: Royal Cancer Hospital

in association with

THE ROYAL MARSDEN HOSPITAL

3899

3444

DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY
CANCER RESEARCH CAMPAIGN CHAIR OF EPIDEMIOLOGY:
JULIAN FETO

BLOCK D
CLIFTON AVENUE,
SUTTON, SURREY
SM2 5PX
01-643 8901 ext. 295

*Circulated to MRC Working
Party on AIDS, 20th May 1985*

There are several aspects of the AIDS problem that should be monitored more extensively in the U.K., and the D.H.S.S. might support a co-ordinated national research programme if the MRC Working Party unanimously recommended a list of specific proposals. I enclose a note on some of the more urgent problems. The two major issues are the rate at which the epidemic is likely to extend into the heterosexual population, and the eventual proportion of infected people who will develop AIDS. The situation may already be catastrophic in relation to haemophiliacs and their families, and to homosexual men in London, but it is perhaps not too late to do something effective to limit further spread.

It is, of course, not yet clear whether HTLV III infection will become widespread in the general population, but there seems to be a consensus among informed researchers both here and in the U.S. that this is a real possibility, and some fairly drastic action would then be forced on the Government. The resulting social damage and the very large numbers of deaths that could occur may be able to be limited only if such action is taken quickly, and it is therefore imperative that every effort should be made to monitor the existing level and further spread of infection. If it can be demonstrated that the epidemic is penetrating quickly into the heterosexual community something will have to be done immediately if it is not to become so widespread that effective containment becomes impossible.

The enclosed note, which has already been read and approved, at least in outline, by ~~Dr. [Name]~~ and several other members of the MRC Working Party on AIDS, describes some of the measures that are probably necessary. Could you let me know whether you are in broad agreement with it, and what additions or alterations you feel should be made?

Yours sincerely,

~~[Signature]~~