

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF THE NBTS

UK Advisory Committee on Transfusion Transmitted Diseases

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd November, 1989

Present: Dr. H.H. Gunson (In the chair)
 Professor J.D. Cash
 Dr. J.A.J. Barbara
 Dr. E.A. Follett
 Dr. R. Mitchell
 Dr. J. Parry
 Dr. W. Wagstaff

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Dr. M. Contreras and Dr. P.P. Mortimer.

2. Minutes

Subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 1989, were approved:

2.1 Item 3.1 para. 8

"It was agreed that the proposed UK BTS Study should be located at NW Thames RTC on the grounds of the profile of its catchment population and current routine practices with regard to the detection of haemoglobinopathies in donors. Further consideration would be given at a later date as to whether it was desirable and/or necessary for an SNBTS contribution."

2.2 Item 5.2

"Professor Cash advised that in the light of the anticipated issue of Guidelines from the NIBSC/UKBTS Liaison Group the TTD Committee should consider the operational and technical issues that will arise as a consequence of introducing malaria antibody testing. It was agreed this matter should be raised at a future meeting of the Committee".

3. Matters arising3.1 Pilot studies with Behring anti-HIV 1/2 test

It was reported that the Behring anti-HIV 1/2 test would not be available until mid-December 1989, at the earliest.

3.2 Report from Manchester Transfusion Centre on the Du Pont anti-HIV 1/2 test

The Committee considered a preliminary report from the Manchester Transfusion Centre on the Du Pont anti-HIV 1/2 test.

- 4.3 It was suggested that populations of drug abusers should be especially monitored, as a separate exercise. It was noted, however, that the American experience led back to those who had experimented with drugs before 1977 who might not now regard themselves as drug abusers.

5. Anti-HCV testing of blood donors

5.1 Paper submitted by this Committee to the ACVSB

Dr. Gunson reported that the ACVSB had agreed to most of the points put forward in the Committee's paper on anti-HCV testing.

It was agreed that the anti-HCV test was a major step forward in identifying those who could potentially transmit HCV.

The ACVSB had noted the need for a confirmatory test either before or shortly after any routine testing of donations. They also agreed that routine screening should not commence until the FDA had granted a license which may be June/July, 1990.

It was also agreed that a cost benefit appraisal should be conducted and this would be discussed with DH.

5.2 Study appraisal

- 5.21 The DH had agreed to provide £25,000 for 3 English centres, Birmingham, Sheffield and Brentwood for the purchase of 15,000 tests through the DH Procurement Directorate. The purpose of this multi-centre study was to evaluate the performance of the test in the routine operations of the RTC.

Ortho Diagnostics Limited has agreed to provide equipment on loan. RTCs will bear the staff costs.

- 5.22 Dr. Mitchell agreed to draw up a flow chart for the testing of donations and the management of donors for discussion at the next meeting and for subsequent presentation to ACVSB. It was suggested that he may wish to contact Dr. Gillon, Dr. Hewitt and Dr. Martlew to assist in this work. It was agreed that consideration in this document should be given to the involvement of gastroenterologists and perhaps some preliminary discussions should be undertaken with this group before screening was introduced.

Action: Dr Mitchell

5.23 The position regarding cellular components which were found to be positive was straight forward, these would not be used, the question of plasma stockpile was raised. The importance of anti-HCV in relation to plasma for fractionation was still a matter under discussion, but this was a matter which required careful monitoring.

5.24 With regard to confirmatory testing, a decision was required as to whether such tests would be restricted to centres which presently undertake HIV confirmatory tests or not. Dr. Gunson agreed to raise this matter, with the PHLS for England and Wales and Professor Cash would consider the situation with respect to Scotland.

Action: Dr.Gunson/Professor Cash

6. Multi-centre ALT/Anti-HBc study

The Committee received for their information a summary of the results of the study of Alanine-Transferase (ALT) and Hepatitis B Core (Anti-HBc) screening of blood donations.

7. Malaria

Members were asked to consider a plan of action for investigation of donations for malarial infection. Drs. Mitchell and Wagstaff agreed to contact Professor Phillips and Dr. Hewitt respectively with a view to submitting a paper to this Committee incorporating a flow chart and information regarding kits which could detect malarial infection.

8. Date of next meeting

Could you please indicate your preference for the date of the next meeting.