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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF TESTS FOR HTLV III ANTIBODIES

Herewith a draft paper to go to the RLG. I also attach a copy of Dr Tedder's letter of application. I hope the proposal will meet with approval.

I am copying this also to Dr Graveney who will wish to be kept in touch with progress on this front.

2 January 1985

DR. ALISON SMITHIES
Dr Alison Smithies
MED SEB
Room 1025a Hannibal House
Ext 3487

copies:

Dr Abrams)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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) without copy of Dr Tedder's letter
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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF AIDS: (HTLV III ANTIBODY SCREENING OF BLOOD DONORS
IN THE BRITISH TRANSFUSION SERVICE)

A radioimmunoassay for HTLV III antibody believed to be a causative agent of AIDS has been developed at the Middlesex Hospital and used there on a research basis. Plans are going ahead to scale up production of the test reagent and it is hoped that tests for blood donors could be ready to be used in the National Blood Transfusion Service in the early part of 1985.

In order to monitor the sensitivity and specificity of the test, to validate positive tests and generally to develop the accuracy of the test a reference centre for problems experienced by Regional Transfusion Centres is mandatory. Dr Tedder of the Middlesex Hospital who developed the radioimmunoassay test in collaboration with Professor R Weiss of the Chester Beatty Institute is willing to undertake this function for further development of the test. If he does so he requires support to cope with the extra work. Dr Tedder has applied for support as follows:-

Basic Grade MLSO	-	£8,165 per annum
Grade 2 Secretary	-	£7,635 per annum
Predictable disposables		£2,500 per annum

The request is for a year in the first place. It may be possible to take on reference work elsewhere once the test has proved accurate and dependable.

In view of the important role in ensuring the safety of blood donations and limiting the spread of AIDS into the wider community than is currently the case there is an urgent need to use this test in the National Blood Transfusion Service and its success will depend on its accuracy which needs to be monitored. MED SEB see this request as a priority in needing support.