

PENROSE INQUIRY ORAL HEARINGS BLOCK 3

DAYS 39 AND 40 - PROFESSOR GORDON LOWE

For what assistance it may be to the Inquiry, I would like to clarify a few points raised during my oral evidence of 28 and 30 June 2011:

(1) Did Professor Lowe discuss the implications with his patients before continuing to use factor concentrate therapy?

I would refer to the UK Haemophilia Society's Haemofact factsheets which provided information to patients from May 1983 to December 1984. I understand that copies of these have already been submitted to the Inquiry by Professor Ludlam, however, further copies can be made available should the Inquiry wish. I recall that Dr. Forbes arranged for these to be made available in the waiting room at the haemophilia unit and given to patients. They provide an update on the developing information on AIDS; give the consistent message that (while patients should balance the risks for themselves) Haemophilia Centre Directors continue to recommend factor concentrate therapy, because the advantages of treatment far outweigh any possible risk; and stress that patients should discuss their personal position with their Centre Director. As I have explained to the Inquiry, I cannot recall any specific patients refusing a recommended treatment with clotting factor concentrates according to unit protocols.

(2) Letter of 8 January 1985 (Day 40, Page 29 onwards)

Having been shown a copy of the letter of 8 January 1985 when giving evidence on 30 June, I have considered again the question asked of me about my input into the drafting of this letter. I recall that Dr Forbes drafted this Glasgow letter, discussed it with myself and Sister Campbell, and asked if (as the most mature junior doctor) I could add my signature to it. The reason for this was that, in the event that patients receiving the letter wished to discuss it prior to an appointment and Dr Forbes was not available, I would be the alternative contact. I was happy to do this, added only my name and signature to Dr Forbes' draft, and gave it to the Unit Secretary, who retyped it for signing by Dr Forbes and myself. The letter was then sent out to patients with appointments by Sister Campbell.

(3) Heat-treated factor IX (Day 40, Page 66 onwards)

Having been shown the letter of Dr Davidson (April 1985) informing Dr. Mitchell of the change-over to commercial heat-treated factor IX, I would like to clarify my earlier written comments submitted to the Inquiry on 2 June 2011, on the possible reasons why Dr. Davidson (now deceased) ordered the commercial blood products noted in the Inquiry's Preliminary Report Table. With regard to Dr Davidson's ordering of commercial factor IX in 1985, this letter would appear to clarify that this order was for heat-treated factor IX, pending the introduction of heat-treated SNBTS factor IX later that year.

I would also comment that the Glasgow Royal Infirmary letter of April 1985, updating information on AIDS to patients, noted in 2 (b) that "all factor concentrates are now heat-treated to destroy the virus". This presumably refers to the introduction of heat-treated factor IX as well as factor VIII.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Lowe