

NQH/24/1

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Dr Moir  
CSO

**SCOTTISH PARTICIPATION IN UK RESEARCH PROJECT ON TRANSFUSION-  
ASSOCIATED NON-A, NON-B HEPATITIS**

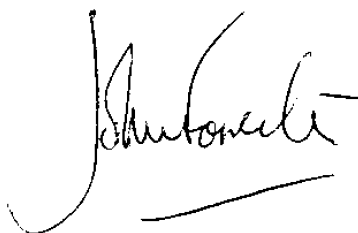
Evidence in USA has suggested that this "hepatitis" might occur less often if donors were screened both for alanine amino-transferase and for anti-Hepatitis B core, and the American Association of Blood Banks are evidently about to implement this screening as soon as problems of false positive reactions are resolved. Some degree of pressure here to follow suit can be expected, eg from haemophiliacs.

UK evidence does not concur, and suggests that here the advantages might be outweighed by loss of "innocent" blood and problems of counselling its donors. SNBTS however have already sought about £600K to institute the screening and conduct it for a year. But the request stands declined.

Joint consideration by SNBTS, SHHD, DHSS and the English Transfusion Service indicates that instead of blindly adopting American practice, research should be conducted, and a project involving 3 English and 1 Scottish Transfusion Centres is being planned. Twelve thousand donor samples would be screened, donors producing positive blood would be investigated further, and at one Centre (in England) the recipients of such blood might be followed up.

The cost of the Scottish component alone is presently estimated at £20K, but may prove greater, because in order to enlarge understanding of the significance of anti-HBc, additional tests may be commended. Funding for the English component will be sought from the Research Management Division, DHSS as soon as the proposal is definitive. That Division will probably consult assessors and then proceed to a decision.

This minute seeks the agreement in principle of CSO that funding for the Scottish component can be sought from CSO, and will be determined in cooperation with the Research Management Division, DHSS, to avoid duplication of assessors' reports and waste of time.



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10 February 1987

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