



NORTH WESTERN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

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HHG/LM

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Professor J.D. Cash,
Director,
Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service,
Headquarters Unit,
Ellen's Glen Road,
EDINBURGH, EH17 7QT.

Dear John,

I received the minutes of the meeting of the SNBTS Directors' held on 3rd March 1987 and I would like to comment on item 3(f).

It is incorrect to state that "... no Scottish Centre was now being asked to participate."

At the last meeting of the U.K. Working Party on Transfusion Associated Hepatitis I was asked to obtain statistical advice on the proposals in the study and two facts emerged from this:

- (1) The number of anti-HBc tests could be reduced to 3600
- (2) An equal number of controls should be included in the study

I consulted the participating RTC's, and in the case of Scotland, Jack Gillon was representing Brian McClelland for this project. We all agreed that the appropriate changes should be made but that the 3600 anti-HBc tests should be performed at one RTC rather than 900 at each of four RTC's and North London RTC was selected for this purpose. I understand that the anti-HBc testing for the Scottish part of the study was to have been done in Glasgow and the cancellation of this aspect did provoke Ruthven to send a tart note to me.

I enclose a copy of the proposals which were sent to the DHSS and SHHD and to every member of the Working Party. You will note from the section entitled PROPOSALS, para. 1. that Edinburgh is included as a participating RTC.

The status of this document is that I have now been invited to send the proposals on the appropriate forms to the DHSS for the three English RTC's and I was proposing to ask Jack Gillon to enquire whether there had been a similar development with SHHD.

I was further dismayed when I carried on reading through minute 3(f) that you are putting forward proposals for the funding of surrogate tests for NANB hepatitis from 1st April 1988. This decision seems to go against the proposal in paragraph 3 on page 2 of the study, to which I thought that the SNBTS was

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a party. Of course, I accept that it might be prudent to have funds ear-marked should the recommendation of the study be that such testing should be introduced, but the tenor of this minute does not suggest that consideration of the results of the multi-centre would be a factor before introducing surrogate testing. Also, I recall your telling me that Scotland would not take unilateral action in this matter without consultation with RTD's in England and Wales.

Also, you will note that as part of the proposed study the sex and age of all donors entering the study will be recorded for exactly the reason that you state in the last paragraph of minute 3(f).

I do hope that the proposed study will be able to go ahead as planned, although I understand that there may be a funding problem from SHHD, which John Forrester mentioned to me when he telephoned to check that minute 3(f) was accurately recorded. It would certainly have some irony if the "organisation with no terms of reference, no management structure and no system by which corporate interests can be appropriately represented" (your letter to me re: Central Committee for Research and Development) is able to obtain funds to carry out this study and SNBTS could not!

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,



H.H. GUNSON,
Director

c.c. Dr. A. Smithies - D.H.S.S.