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RAC/MAC

16th January, 1974

N.A. Milne Esq., W.S.
Hon. Secretary,
5 St. Colme Street,
Edinburgh.

Dear Mr. Milne,

Health Service Reorganisation, Scotland - The Blood Transfusion Service

1. Following a meeting of the Regional Directors and the Scientific Director of the Protein Fractionation Centre, held in the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on 9th January 1974, I have been requested to convey to you their unanimous opinion and constructive suggestions regarding the future arrangements for the management of the Blood Transfusion Service in Scotland.
2. They desire to express their alarm and deep concern that the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association has indicated its intention to transfer its responsibilities to the Common Services Agency on April 1st 1974, solely, as it appears to the Directors, on the basis of Circular HSR(73)C40. They wish to convey in the strongest possible terms that they consider the proposals for the transfer of these responsibilities as set out in HSR(73)C40 to be totally inadequate as a basis on which to judge whether the immediate and future commitments to the Health Service can be effectively discharged.
3. In view of the imminent changes in the scope and function of the Blood Transfusion Services, it is their considered opinion that the lack of detail not only renders the document unacceptable as a formula for their transfer to the Common Services Agency, but also calls into question the choice of this Agency as the organisation best suited to undertake the management of the Blood Transfusion Service in Scotland. In particular it is stressed that far reaching changes in the Clinical, Scientific, Technical and Organisational spheres of blood transfusion practice have emerged since the present proposals were first considered. They appreciate that detailed information about the intentions /

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intentions of the Common Services Agency may not be available to either the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association or the Scottish Home and Health Department representatives. If this is so, it reinforces the need to delay implementation of HSR(73)C40.

4. As the professional group directly responsible for the operation of the Blood Transfusion Services in Scotland, they therefore consider it their duty to make the following proposals :-

(i) That arrangements for the transfer of responsibility for the Blood Transfusion Service to the Common Services Agency be held in abeyance, in order to allow full and urgent discussions to take place between the Medical and Scientific Directors, the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association, the Central Consultative Committee and Senior Representatives of the Scottish Home and Health Department.

(ii) That the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association be asked to continue in office in its present form, with the addition of the National Medical Director and the Administrative Officer with supporting staff, until such time as an acceptable solution for the effective management of the Blood Transfusion Service in Scotland has been agreed.

(iii) That a decision on the future role of the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Association be postponed until the doubts expressed in this submission are resolved.

5. I am also requested to convey to you that this communication represents the unanimous opinion of the staff listed below.

Yours sincerely,

Doctor Charles Cameron,
Doctor John Cash,
Doctor R.A. Cumming,
Doctor Brodie Lewis,
Doctor John Wallace,
Mr. John Watt.

Doctor Iain Cook was unable to be present at the discussion, but has intimated his agreement with the opinions set out above.

Distribution:

Doctor J.C.J. Ives
Doctor A. Ritchie
Doctor A.E. Bell
Doctor I.S. Macdonald
Mr. R.N. Roberts
Miss M. Corrie
Major-General Hugh C. Jeffrey, C.B.E., (for information)