



HEPATITIS C LOOKBACK - PILOTS AND PREPARATIONS

A SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE FOR SNBTS SENIOR STAFF FOLLOWING THE SUNDAY MAIL PUBLICITY, 19 NOVEMBER 1994

- The Scottish Office Home and Health Department and the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service regularly review issues surrounding the safety of blood and blood products.
- As part of this process, a pilot study was recently completed in the South East of Scotland Regional Transfusion Centre. This study was designed to assess the benefits to be gained from tracing the recipients of blood components made from donations given prior to the introduction of testing by donors who have subsequently been found to have antibodies to the Hepatitis 'C' virus.
- Following encouraging results from this small study, a larger pilot scheme is now under way in the Glasgow and West of Scotland Regional Transfusion Centre. As part of this study, staff at the Centre have traced Mr [REDACTED]'s donations and are working with the hospitals concerned to try to confirm the precise details of dates of issues and recipients. Investigations are continuing, and as this involves detailed examination of medical records up to 17 years old these may take some time.
- Provided hospital records are sufficient, the individual recipients of the donations will be traced and any necessary action taken. (It will not of course be possible to advise the donor of the outcome of this programme because of strict rules governing the confidentiality of patient information.)
- The expert UK committee on the safety of blood is due to consider proposals for a co-ordinated programme across the UK to try to trace all individuals who risk having acquired the virus through blood or blood products. In the meantime the UK Blood Transfusion Services are continuing with their detailed preparations to be able to respond quickly to the instructions of the UK Departments of Health when these are issued - including further pilot studies where appropriate.

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