

Minute of 1st
meeting Feb 1977

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

BPWG 1st Minutes

WORKING GROUP ON TRENDS IN THE DEMAND FOR BLOOD PRODUCTS

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 1977 AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Present: Mr P Benner (Chairman)
Dr J D Cash
Dr J Darnborough
Dr Helen Dodsworth
Dr I Gillies
Dr W d'A Maycock
Dr A D McIntyre
Dr Sheila L Waiter
Mr T E Dutton (Secretary)

In Attendance: Mr R P Cleasby - DHCS

1. After thanking members of the group for giving up time to participate in the study, the Chairman explained that the Department had become conscious of a need to review the organisation of the National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS), particularly in relation to the demand for blood and blood products and its ability to meet this demand. A two-stage approach had been suggested, the first stage being the consideration by a small professional group of likely trends in demand; subsequent questions on organisation could be examined in the light of these views. Although it was unlikely that the group would be able to produce precise estimates of demand it was essential to reach the best estimate of likely trends in demand of the main products as soon as possible. It was desirable that policy should be formulated with a broad appreciation of the potential demands on the service; the group, taking account of the practicalities of supply, is forming its advice. It was noted that DHSD were pleased to be associated with the study but were not necessarily committed to accepting the group's advice.
2. Dr Cash proposed an amendment to the terms of reference (in paper BPWG(77)3). Like other Directors, he was conscious that the open-ended nature of the NHS Drugs bill would allow commercial firms to meet those demands which the Blood Transfusion Services could not satisfy; such a development was considered undesirable, and if it were to be avoided future planning would have to ensure that the means to achieve NHS self-sufficiency in blood products are available.
3. The group agreed that the demands of some clinicians were not scientifically based and that the uses of blood products, notably PPF were sometimes misunderstood. This suggested that the demand for blood products did not equate with the real need for them.
4. Although it was accepted that a service which collected sufficient blood to meet the demand for albumin, factor VIII and factor IX would simultaneously have enough raw material to satisfy the requirements for other products, the group thought it desirable to take a wider view of blood production and therefore to

to consider trends in demand for:

- (a) Albumin and PPF, including synthetic products
- (b) Factor VIII: NHS concentrate, commercial concentrate) cryoprecipitate and other coagulation factors
- (c) Factor IX
- (d) Dried plasma and fresh frozen plasma
- (e) Normal and specific immunoglobulins
- (f) Cellular elements: red cells, white cells
- (g) Platelets

5. Dr Darnborough tabled a questionnaire and a summary of results prepared by a Council of Europe enquiry into indications for the use of albumin, PPF and other plasma volume expanders in member states and Finland. He thought there would be no difficulty in obtaining formal permission to make use of the information. Dr Maycock tabled a note on the production capacities of the central fractionation laboratories in England and Scotland. The Department would seek information on the use of commercial products.

6. The Chairman suggested that members should consider whom the group should approach for information and opinions on the future trends in demand and let the Secretary know, indicating in each case whether written information or oral evidence would be preferable. He thought that in most instances information could be obtained by correspondence. A comprehensive list would then be circulated and members could decide how to proceed. The Secretary would prepare a draft letter to send to experts who were to be invited to provide information which would be cleared with members. The date of the next meeting would be settled later.

7. The group approved the suggested course of action.

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