

# MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

## BLOOD TRANSFUSION RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the third meeting of the reconstituted committee held at 2.00 p.m. on Monday 8 March 1982 at 20 Park Crescent, London W1N 4AL

Present: Dr H H Gunson (Chairman), Dr J M Goldman (Scientific Secretary), Dr J D Cash, Dr R S Lane, Professor F Stratton, Dr J O'H Tobin

Service Representatives: Air Commodore F R Jones, Surgeon Commander W Whitrow

Observers: Dr Petronella Clark (DHSS), Dr Diana Walford (DHSS)

In attendance: Dr Helen Duke, Miss S Carpenter

### 1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Dr A E Bell, Brigadier England and Professor D J Weatherall. Dr Gunson welcomed Dr Petronella Clark who would shortly be taking Dr Diana Walford's place as DHSS Observer.

### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were signed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:-

#### Item 6 Bridge anticoagulant neutralising agent (BANA)

First paragraph to read as follows:-

"Dr Walford explained that Dr Nour-Eldin would shortly be ineligible to apply for research grants with which to pursue his work, as he would not have the facilities to conduct it. If BANA did reduce the amount of Factor VIII needed the DHSS would be interested in exploring it. Dr Walford then asked the Committee, ....."

### 3. Matters arising

#### 3.1 Report by the MRC Working Party on the Use of Factor IX Concentrates for Conditions other than Christmas Disease (BT 82/2) Part 2 Rapid reversal of anticoagulant therapy.

The committee were reminded by the Chairman that they had considered the first part of this report at their last meeting and had deferred judgement until the second part had been received. Members agreed that because the Working Party had had difficulties in mounting the trial many of the patients who had eventually been entered were suffering from relatively minor abnormalities of blood coagulation and had not usually met the strict criteria laid down. The use of pooled material was also questioned.

After discussion members agreed that they would not recommend to the Systems Board that the report should be published in full but that publication of a summary (perhaps in the form of a letter to the Lancet) might fulfil a useful purpose.

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### 3.2 Report from the Working Party on the use of Crystalloids and Colloids in the management of Hypovolaemia

3.2.1 Dr Cash (Chairman of the Working Party), speaking to his report (BT 82/3), said that the main Working Party appeared to have lost interest in the proposed trial, possibly because they preferred to perform detailed investigations on small groups of patients rather than the wide ranged studies done under normal clinical conditions which were, in his view, required if the Working Party were to fulfil its remit. The Working Party had formed 2 subgroups to prepare trial protocols in the fields of trauma (Chairman Professor I McA Ledingham) and elective vascular surgery (Chairman Mr C V Ruckley). The Trauma Subgroup had failed to formulate a protocol and had been disbanded on the advice of the Chairman. Dr Cash proposed that the Working Party be also disbanded but that the vascular surgery subgroup should remain in being.

3.2.2 In discussion it was noted that (i) the working party had been formed as the result of discussions on the use of plasma reduced blood and it was felt that the practical clinical problem of whether the additional use of crystalloids or colloids (particularly albumin) lead to better results might be answered from experience and not from the outcome of a trial. (ii) The American Trial results published by Virgilio might have identified a subgroup of patients with incipient left ventricular failure in whom the use of albumin might be harmful. (iii) A trial would probably not be possible to mount in the field of burns.

3.2.3 It was agreed that:-

(i) The Working Party on Crystalloids and Colloids should be disbanded.

(ii) The Subgroup on elective vascular surgery should continue as a subgroup of the Blood Transfusion Research Committee. The subgroup should be urged to formulate a protocol for a clinical trial.

### 3.3 Future of the Post transfusion Hepatitis Working Party

3.3.1 The committee unanimously agreed that this working party was in a field in which many other groups, both inside and outside the MRC, were active.

3.3.2 It was agreed that this working party should be disbanded and that any matters in the field of post transfusion hepatitis that arose in future should be passed to an appropriate advisory body.

### 3.4 Research aspects of monoclonal antibodies relating to the Blood Transfusion service

The Chairman informed the Committee that a working party of the Regional Transfusion Directors (Chairman Professor Stratton) had been formed. It had defined the type of antibody which might have future importance.

The MRC would be kept informed of the deliberations of this Working Party.

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3.5 Bridge Anticoagulant Neutraising Agent (Dr Nour-Eldin)

3.5.1 Dr Lane said that he had not heard from Dr Nour-Eldin recently but that space would still be available in the BPL for him to work there. The studies that would need to be undertaken by Dr Nour-Eldin would be expensive and the budget of the BPL would need to be increased; there would also have to be approval from the PMC for the development of a new product.

3.5.2 In discussion the need for Dr Nour-Eldin to work on haemophilia dogs was raised.

3.5.3 The Committee agreed with some reservations to approve the work to be done by Dr Nour-Eldin at BPL subject to procedural and financial considerations.

4. Final report on the special Project Grant held by Dr Mortimer and Dr Vandevelde (BT 82/4) for studies to identify and characterise acute hepatitis occurring in the UK due to "non A, non B" viruses

This was noted with interest.

5. Report of the BTRC to the Systems Board and future of the committee (BT 82/5)

5.1 Dr Gunson said that the report had been written in November 1981 and needed updating. He drew attention to the relevance of the committee in several overlapping fields. He explained that the committee should justify its existence and drew attention to the possible need for modification of the terms of reference and membership.

5.2 In discussion members stressed the importance of the MRC maintaining support in the field of Blood Transfusion although it was recognised that it was open to individuals to apply for project grant support. However it was noted that the Blood Transfusion services had largely abandoned research because of the MRC interest.

5.3 The need for the MRC to maintain support for the field of Blood Transfusion was considered to be greater than ever before since the formation of Celltech.

5.4 It was agreed that if the MRC were to disband the BTRC a similar body would be set up by the Blood Transfusion services. There was no need for the MRC to support all work in the field of Blood Transfusion, but there was a need to coordinate MRC committees in the field some of which had no representation of the service.

5.5 It was noted also that many of the research projects in blood transfusion were concerned with the evaluation of new products for which product licences were to be sought, some members questioned the relevance of this type of research to the MRC.

5.6 Dr Walford said that DHSS and MRC had a continuing dialogue over research in Blood Transfusion and that the Department favoured the continuance of the BTRC. The future of research in this field of Blood Transfusion would be raised this year to the MRC by the Department.

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6. Any other business

Dr Lane (speaking to his tabled paper which contained proposals for a clinical trial of normal human immunoglobulin in hypogammaglobulinaemia in collaboration with Dr C L Asherson and Dr A D B Webster (CRC)) said that the proposals had been passed to the MRC by the Department. It was agreed to circulate the papers to the members of the BTRC for comment.

7. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that this should not be fixed pending the consideration of the report of the committee by the Systems Board. A meeting should be held in early autumn 82.

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