

H/B13/01A 14

Mr Sutton

Improving Manufacturing Conditions at BPL

1. Thank you for your minute of 7 September. I am afraid the information it contains is too vague for our purposes.
2. What we need, in order to plan and argue the case for the expenditure needed to maintain production at the present level, is a detailed itemized list showing all short-term improvements in priority order, with the cost of each. The estimates of cost will have to stand up to close scrutiny, and the need for each item will have to be carefully justified. (I suggest an appendix setting out the justification for each item). The priority order will have to take account of the dependence of one improvement upon the completion of another. You are aware that the final report of the Medicines Inspectors will include a list of measures reckoned to be immediately necessary.
3. We must, urgently, be in a position
 - (a) to know what 'stop-gap' and other money is available from the 1979/80 allocation for immediately necessary improvements, and whether it will cover all of them;
 - (b) what additional, unplanned, expenditure will be required in the next few years.
4. There appears to be a special problem about staffing. This can be considered in two parts:
 - (a) is the present grading of staff adequate?
 - (b) what new staff are required?
5. Regarding 4(a), you have seen my minute of 7 September to Mr Heyman, setting out the urgency of getting on with an evaluation of the work of the scientific and technical staff at BPL. Subject to anything this may reveal I have no reason to suppose that this group of staff is underpaid by NHS standards. You do not say what grades of staff are being lost to commerce, or whether the rate of defection is abnormally high, but we cannot contemplate paying more than the appropriate NHS rate. Some work was done towards

evaluating the work of ancillary staff at BPL. I am not sure how this stands, and I would be glad if you could chase it up (keeping closely in touch with Mr Armour).

6. Regarding 4(b), new staff will have to be included in the list of priorities. A job description, in broad terms, will have to be given for each grade so that we can put an NTS price on it. Your minute however mentions the difficulty of accommodating additional staff in the present laboratories. Does this mean that we cannot hope to maintain the present level of production without substantial new building? If so we need to know what reduced level of production we can expect in return for any money that is to be spent.
7. You will of course have to work closely with Dr Lane.

GRO C: J Harley

cc. Mr Wormald
Dr Harris
Dr Oliver
Dr Walford
Mr MacCoid
Mr Brechin

10.9.79