

MB/ESS

16 November 1990

DR J LEVI
Consultant Gastroenterologist
NORTHWICK PARK HOSPITAL
Watford Road
Uxbridge
Middlesex
HA1 3UJ

Dear Dr Levi

I would be grateful if you would offer us your advice about a difficult problem facing us.

As of Spring 1991 it is likely that we will be mandated to screen all blood donations for anti-HCV. When our reference laboratory confirm that a donor is anti-HCV positive we will contact and counsel the donors involved. From preliminary studies, we expect to identify 5-7 donors per week who are confirmed HCV positive. At the counselling session we will take fresh samples for LFTs, repeat HCV screening and possibly for PCR. It is our plan (with donors' permission) to inform donors' GPs of the results obtained. It is at this stage that we are unsure of how to proceed! We do not know enough about HCV to know whether it is appropriate to suggest that GPs should refer HCV positive donors to a hepatologist. When I have discussed this point with other hepatologists they have been very keen to see all HCV positive donors, even those with normal LFTs, with a view to further investigation including liver biopsy.

We are concerned to act in the donors' best interest and would not like to subject them to tests merely for research purposes. At the same time if referral is appropriate, we would like to make that clear to GPs when we contact them. What would you suggest that we should advise GPs to do with HCV positive donors?

I look forward to your reply with interest.

Yours sincerely

M BRENNAN MRCP MRCPATH
Locum Consultant

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