

*Ad Hoc Advisory Committee* — *HCV Look back file*  
*response from RTC's*  
NATIONAL BLOOD AUTHORITY

## National Blood Transfusion Service

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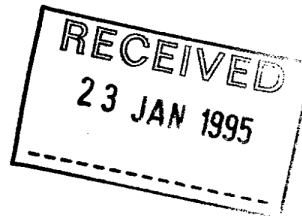
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Director: D. Lee, MD, FRCPI, FRCPath.

Please reply to: MANCHESTER  
Ref: EML/MB

17 January 1995

Dr A Robinson  
Medical Director  
National Blood Authority  
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Dear Angela

It will not surprise you to learn that we have been inundated with enquiries from concerned recipients of blood transfusions. In addition there have been calls about HIV and other risks and also enquiries from donors.

Astute callers realise that there will be a number of donors before September 1991, who did not donate again, whose HCV status is unknown and therefore potential risks to recipients also unknown. They are not reassured by our standard answer. We are coming under increasing pressure to offer screening tests particularly where children have been transfused. I have discussed this with Douglas and we find it very difficult to defend a refusal to screen, given that the test is so simple and a negative result can provide immediate reassurance.

It would be relatively easy for us to offer screening tests here and we have an excellent relationship with PHLS who will conduct our confirmatory tests (PCR). On a small scale no doubt we could both absorb the additional costs of testing. However, on a large scale there is the question of who pays for this? I am reasonably confident that we can cope in terms of organisation.

We need clear, written guidance on our position with regard to screening. We are reluctant to adopt a unilateral policy which may place an obligation on other centres to follow suit. However, in terms of allaying recipients' anxiety I believe that we should be sympathetic to requests to test. Refusal to do so does not show the NBS in a good light and referral back to GPs' merely seems to be "passing the buck". We have already had one complaint from a GP who is reluctant to accept responsibility for testing.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

Dr E M Love  
Consultant Haematologist/  
Deputy Director

*Responded to by my Personal guidance given 19/1/95*

cc/Dr Lee, Dr Shwe