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GRO-C 2/2/87
Dr Graveney
GRO-C

SCREENING BLOOD DONATIONS FOR ALT AND ANTI-HBc

... I enclose a copy of a proposal for a study of surrogate testing for non-A non-B hepatitis (NANBH). The proposal has been drafted by a Working Party of Regional Transfusion Directors and Virologists.

As you will be aware surrogate testing of all blood donations for NANBH has already been introduced by the American Association of Blood Banks and also in certain units in Germany.

There are a number of reasons why the UK should not necessarily follow suit:-

In the first place the tests are surrogate and it is known that the use of the tests will not exclude all donations which are capable of transmitting NANBH.

Secondly, the long term effect of NANBH infection is not really known, but it may be of only minor impact.

Thirdly, the incidence of donations with positive results to the surrogate tests among the current blood donor population is unknown. It may be that self deferral of high risk donors in response to the AIDS publicity has already reduced this to a minimum.

The proposed study aims to determine the number of donors who would be found positive by these surrogate tests, it is also intended to investigate positive donors to determine if the 'positive' findings are significant with the regard to the transmission of NANBH.

You are aware that this is a priority amongst our bids for research. I hope that we can obtain agreement to go ahead with the study with all speed.

GRO-C

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23 February 1987

cc: Dr Metters
Dr Lader
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