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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

JMC CL(82)14

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DHSS/ NW THAMES RHA)
FOR THE CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES

1982

MINUTES OF THE 14TH MEETING HELD ON THE 27 APRIL AT THE DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY HANNIBAL HOUSE, ELEPHANT AND CASTLE, LONDON SE1.

PRESENT:

Dr Harris (Chairman)
Mr Armour
Mr Bathurst
Mr Collins
Mr Lee
Mr Smart
Dr Gunson
Dr Holburn
Dr LaneMr Harley
Mr Harris
Dr Clarke
Mr Godfrey
Mr Green } Secretariat

APOLOGIES

1. Apologies had been received from Professor Mollison.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - JMC CL(81)34

2. These were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

(a) BGRL move to Oxford

3. Dr Holburn reported that BGRL's move to the Radcliffe Infirmary had been completed at the end of January. The Harkness Building, as adapted, was well suited to the Laboratory's requirements. Recruitment of staff was proceeding satisfactorily and the Laboratory's output was building up steadily. Mr Armour reported that there were no residual personnel problems from the move. Alternative employment or redundancy terms, as appropriate, had been agreed with those members of staff who had elected not to move to Oxford. Mr Collins reported that a reversionary value for the former Chelsea site had been agreed with St Martin's Property Corporation at £200,000 and contracts would be exchanged shortly. The Chairman thanked Mr Collins, on behalf of the Committee, for co-ordinating the conversion of the Harkness Building and undertook to write to Oxford DHA to thank them for their co-operation. Mr Collins was asked to pass on the Committee's appreciation to the design team.

(b) Progress on Interim Development at BPL

4. Dr Lane spoke to the 'Interim Building Project' section of BPL's draft report for 1981/82 (designated JMC CL(82)12). He reported that work on the Coagulation Factors Area was nearing completion and that the facility would soon be in use. Mr Collins explained that the delay in completing this work was attributable mainly to the damage caused to new filters on installation which had resulted in repeated test failures. Details of the latest test were awaited. Discussions with the contractors on compensation for the delay were in hand and a report on any resulting changes in capital expenditure would be incorporated in the design team's final report.

Mr Collins also reported that replacement autoclaves had been purchased, were on site and would be installed and commissioned to HTM 10 Standard during the 3 week closure of the C.F. Laboratory in May. Dr Lane anticipated that the close down would result in a slight reduction in the pro-rata supply of Factor VIII to Regions and undertook to prepare a paper on the effects of the closedown on Factor VIII supply for the next RTD meeting.

5. The Committee noted the progress made. The Chairman emphasised the need for close supervision of the remaining work on the interim development to ensure its completion within the cash-limit.

(c) Progress on Senior Appointments at BPL

6. Mr Armour reported that the Deputy Director (Administration) and the Head of Quality Control had been appointed (Mr Mallory and Dr Snape respectively). Interviews had been arranged for the short-listed candidates for the Chief Engineer's post.

(d) Site Security Arrangements at BPL.

7. Dr Lane reported that arrangements were in hand to introduce a security system which would incorporate; identity cards, a physical barrier to exclude traffic during non-working hours, an electronic surveillance system at key points (including the animal house), an alarm system and a small increase in Group 4 security policing. The estimate cost of £10,000 - £12,000 capital and £2,500 per annum revenue could be contained within the existing budget. The Committee endorsed Dr Lane's proposals.

(e) Occupancy of Lister Crest - JMC CL(82)6

8. The Committee noted the contents of the paper which reported Mr Roderick's move to Lister Cottages.

(f) Sale of Surplus Paste - JMC CL(82)7

9. Dr Lane explained that the quantitative analysis of the surplus paste had shown that its potential yield in terms of products could reduce considerably unless the paste was stored and transported at low temperature. BPL did not have such facilities nor did it have the facilities to manufacture products from the paste in order to realise its maximum value.

10. The Chairman stressed the importance of realising the potential income which might be derived from this material. After discussion it was agreed that Mr Smart would chair a small Working Party comprising Dr Lane, Mr Angilley (DHSS Economic Advisers Office) and a representative of DHSS Supplies Division to examine the options available for the sale of the paste in its present or a refined form and, if appropriate, to discuss with the companies who had expressed interest, the terms of a possible agreement with DHSS.

LONG TERM MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CBLs - JMC CL(82)3

11. The Chairman reported that an announcement would be made shortly.

POLICY STEERING GROUP FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BPL

12. Mr Start reported that the Group had met twice since it last reported in October 1981 and had made the following progress:

i. Possible conversion of an existing pharmaceutical factory.

At the request of the Steering Group, 3 senior production executives had reported on the viability of converting an existing factory to BPL's purposes. They had concluded that there were no suitable premises available and that there would be little advantage, financial or otherwise, in pursuing this course. Ministers had been advised accordingly.

ii. Supply of Plasma

Regional Health Authorities had been approached concerning their willingness and ability to increase supplies of plasma to the redeveloped BPL. Regions accepted the principle of self sufficiency but were unable to commit resources immediately to the increase of plasma collection to the required level. It would be necessary to build up supplies in stages and this would be taken into account in planning the new Laboratory's capacity.

iii. Capacity for the fractionation of English plasma at PFC Liberton

Following the continuous production experiment at Liberton and subsequent discussions concerning shift - working, the PS& had concluded that BPL should be planned to meet the needs of England and Wales without a contribution from PFC Liberton. The Committee endorsed this approach but recommended that discussions should be initiated between DHSS and SHHD with a view to a reciprocal arrangement regarding supplies of products during times of shortage.

iv. Product Specifications

The product specifications of BPL and PFC had been passed to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee for consideration with a recommendation that there should be consistency and standardisation in specifications to facilitate interchange of products as necessary. Dr Clarke was asked to pursue with DHSS Medicines Division the question of whether consistency of appearance and presentation should be included in BP/EP standards.

v. Feasibility Study

Matthew Hall Norcain Engineering Ltd (MHN) had been commissioned to carry out a feasibility study on the redevelopment of the Elstree site. The subsequent report had been studied in detail and the views of the Working Party on Fractionation Technology had been obtained. As a result Mr Collins had taken up several aspects of the study with MHN:

(a) The possible wasteful use of the first floor of the production area in the plan.

(b) The possible incorporation of a 2-stream system rather than a 3-stream system.

(c) The possible more efficient use of existing infrastructure installations.

(d) Estimates for costs of an installation to handle three possible production levels - 200,000, 350,000, 435,000 kg of fresh frozen plasma per annum, in each case plus 50,000 kg of time-expired plasma per annum.

(e) Design options for equipment and layout.

Agreement for the employment of MHN as management contractors had been sought from Treasury. (Mr Bathurst reported that recent correspondence from MHN had raised some doubts about the level of fees if MHN were to be engaged as management contractors. Mr Collins was asked to pursue this with MHN as a matter of urgency in consultation with DHSS Works Group and Finance Division).

vi. Genetic Engineering

The Group had considered the implications of progress in the field of genetic engineering and had concluded that considerable work was needed before genetically engineered blood products became available commercially and therefore the planned redevelopment of BPL, if carried out quickly and efficiently, was still a viable proposition.

vii. Planning permission for the redevelopment at Elstree

A formal planning application had been made and had been agreed in principle by the Planning Committee of the Borough Council. Mr Godfrey reported that individual members of the County Council were pursuing their objections through the local MP. However it was hoped that a visit to BPL would dispel the Councillors' concern about the scale of development in the Green Belt.

PRODUCTION AT BPL IN 1981/82

13. Dr Lane reported that 1981/82 had seen an increase in volume and an improvement in quality of the plasma supplied to BPL by Regions. As a result the Laboratory had achieved record production levels of its main products - see Appendix 1 of JMC CL(82)12-and Dr Lane was optimistic that when the interim redevelopment programme was completed BPL would be in a position to meet its production targets. He stressed, however, that the Laboratory would not be able to function at its present level indefinitely and emphasised the importance of early redevelopment.

14. Dr Gunson explained that the improvements in plasma supply had been stimulated by the introduction of the pro-rata distribution of products and the increasing co-operation between Regions and BPL for which Dr Lane and his staff deserved credit. The Chairman congratulated Dr Lane and the staff of BPL for their work in what had been a difficult period and undertook to thank the staff by letter on behalf of the Committee.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BPL/WELLCOME IN THE PRODUCTION OF A JOINT RIA TEST -
JMC CL(82)1

15. Mr Smart reported that arrangements for the development of a joint RIA test were progressing satisfactorily. It had been agreed in preliminary discussions between BPL, Wellcome and DHSS that detailed proposals should be formulated by BPL and Wellcome for consideration by the JMC. Mr Harley stressed that care was being taken to safeguard all NHS interests in the arrangement. Dr Lane confirmed that G.D. Searle would be writing to DHSS to relinquish all claims to the stocks of raw material held at BPL. The Committee endorsed the collaboration in principle.

BPL OVERPRODUCTION - JMC CL(82)8, JMC CL(82)9

16. The Committee noted the contents of the papers

PROPOSAL FOR A CLINICAL TRIAL OF INTRAVENOUS IMMUNOGLOBULIN - JMC CL(82)5

17. The Committee discussed Dr Lane's proposal and agreed that since both the Scientific and Technical Committee and the Blood Transfusion Research Committee of the MRC had given their support, Dr Lane and Dr Clarke should prepare a final protocol on receipt of which the Chairman would pursue with DHSS' Chief Scientist the suitability of funding by MRC under the 'Concordat' arrangements.

CONTROL AND DOCUMENTATION AT BPL-JMC CL(82)10

18. The Committee noted the contents of JMC CL(82)10 and Dr Wills' comments /JMC CL(82)15/. Mr Armour offered the RHA's help in securing a written contract which would define more closely the procedure for waste destruction by an outside contractor.

PURCHASE OF POOL CARS FOR BPL

19. Mr Armour tabled papers /designated JMC CL(82)13/ reporting on action taken, with the Chairman's approval, to purchase 3 estate type vehicles for use at BPL on a 'pool' basis in strict accordance with NHS procedure. It was agreed that the 'pool' system should continue until the long term management arrangements for the Laboratories had been finalised.

CBL CASH LIMITS - JMC CL(82)2, JMC CL(82)4 and JMC CL(82)11

20. Mr Harris reported that an extra £1m above the original PFSC allocation had been secured for the Central Blood Laboratories' budget for 1982/83 position. The Committee accepted that in the current climate the funding for 1982/83 was reasonable. The Chairman emphasised the need to operate within the agreed cash limits.

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

21. Mr Godfrey reported that, with the exception of Dr Lane's response to the Medicines Inspectorate report, which had been endorsed by the STC and accepted by Medicines Division, all STC items had been dealt with during the JMC meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

22. It was agreed that the next meeting should be arranged in the light of progress on the long-term management of the Laboratories.