



NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE (WALES)

GWASANAETH CENEDLAETHOL TRALLWYSO GWAED (CYMRU)

Managing Director/*Rheolwraig Gyfarwyddwraig*: Dr. F. G. Williams, ATCL, MBBS, LL.M., FRCPath.  
Medical Director/*Cyfarwyddwr Meddygol*: J. A. F. Napier, PhD, FRCPath.

Extension: **GRO-C**  
**GRO-C** (Secretary)

Our Ref: JAFN/SAS

25 March 1996

Dr A Rejman  
Senior Medical Officer  
Department of Health  
Eileen House  
80-94 Newington Causeway  
London  
SE1 6EF

Dear Andrej

#### HEPATITIS B CORE ANTIBODY AND BLOOD DONOR SCREENING

I have been asked to advise with regard to a claim against the North London Blood Transfusion Service by a donor who contracted Hepatitis B infection through a surface antigen negative but core antibody positive donation.

I have been in touch with Pat Hewitt who is fully aware of the problem - in fact it was a patient given a substantial number of blood products to cover treatment for leukaemia including bone marrow transplantation who has, apart from the HBV infection, been fortunate to have made a so far successful recovery. I think it is now well understood that the issue is not one of negligence in the blood screening which was operating properly under current Department of Health approved blood screening policies.

The issue has therefore been raised as to the nature of the evidence supporting the decision not to mandate the use of anti HBC screening of donations. I am aware that this was based on advice given to the Department by the Advisory Committee on the Virological Safety of Blood. It would be helpful in assessing this case to know what these arguments were. Are you able to help?

**RECEIVED**  
29 MAR 1996



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Rhydlafar St. Fagans Cardiff CF5 6XF Telephone: 01222 890302 Facsimile: 01222 890825  
Rhydlafar Sain Ffagan Caerdydd CF5 6XF Ffôn: 01222 890302 Ffacs: 01222 890825



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