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PQs 746 & 736

It seems appropriate for these two questions to be answered together and I have therefore drafted reply accordingly.

The UK Regional Haemophilia Centre Directors recently made specific recommendations to those involved in treating haemophiliacs about the use of high purity factor VIII and IX products. These recommendations are not Department of Health guidance. As is made clear in the recommendations they are primarily intended for clinical guidance. It should also be noted that it is a consensus document rather than a unanimous one.

Some high purity products are licenced under the Medicines Act, some are the subject of clinical trial certificates and some are being prescribed by clinicians on 'a named-patient basis' as they are entitled to do.

As is the case with introduction of treatments generally, regions are expected to finance the introduction of high purity factor VIII/IX from their main allocation of funds. It has never been the intention that money should be earmarked for the introduction of high purity factor VIII/IX and no such commitment has been given nor indeed is proposed to be given. It is for the local health authorities to make funds available from their general allocations according to their own spending priorities.

The price of high purity factor 8 is higher than the intermediate product but is dropping as the number of suppliers, including BPL, increases and the market becomes more competitive.

GRO-C

JOHN CANAVAN

4, some are the subject of clinical trial certificate exemptions (CTXs)