



## "Re: Letter from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkin on Haemophilia and Hepatitis"

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Anna Norris  
07/03/2005 15:08

To: Frances Smethurst/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
cc: Zubeda Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C; William  
Connon/PD-PMD/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Shaun  
Gallagher/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
bcc:  
Subject: Re: Letter from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkin on Haemophilia and  
Hepatitis

Frances

PS(PH) is happy with the letter to Lord Jenkins.

Anna

----- Forwarded by Anna Norris/PR-OFF/DOH/GB on 07/03/2005 15:06 -----

Zubeda Seedat  
01/03/2005 17:20

To: Anna Norris/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
cc: Frances Smethurst/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C; William  
Connon/PD-PMD/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Shaun  
Gallagher/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
bcc:  
Subject: Re: Letter from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkin on Haemophilia and  
Hepatitis

Anna,

As agreed I have drafted a background note and letter to Lord Jenkins. It was agreed that PS(PH) would be asked to clear the letter before sign off by Lord Warner.

Sorry for missing your deadline.

Thanks  
Zubeda



Letter to Lord Jenkins.doc

----- Forwarded by Zubeda Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB on 01/03/2005 16:52 -----

**Anna Norris**

09/02/2005 20:12

To: Frances Smethurst/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
 cc: Roberta Wallis/COS/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Shaun  
 Gallagher/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C; William  
 Connon/PD-PMD/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Zubeda  
 Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
 Subject: Re: Letter from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkin on Haemophilia and  
 Hepatitis

Zubeda

I think I'll need it by noon on Monday 21st please.

Thanks

Anna

Frances Smethurst

**Frances Smethurst**

09/02/2005 20:09

To: Shaun Gallagher/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
 cc: Anna Norris/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Roberta  
 Wallis/COS/DOH/GB@GRO-C; William  
 Connon/PD-PMD/DOH/GB@GRO-C; Zubeda  
 Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@GRO-C  
 bcc:  
 Subject: Re: Letter from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkin on Haemophilia and  
 Hepatitis

**Shaun**

This sounds absolutely fine to me. I think you are right that the letter probably should come from Lord Warner and be cleared by PS(PH) office. If you could let Lord Jenkin know Lord Warner is out of the country on official business and will be back in the office on 1 March and we will send a response asap after that, that would be really helpful. Thanks

Zubeeda - it might be helpful if you could attach to a draft letter to PS(L) a short background note that covers the main points Shaun raises below. If you could get a cleared draft (i.e. one that PS(PH)'s office has approved) to us by 3:30pm on Wednesday 23 Feb, that would be fine. You may also need to discuss deadlines with Anna Norris who will need the draft first.

Thanks

Frances Smethurst

Private Secretary PS(L)

Tel: GRO-C

Shaun Gallagher

**BACKGROUND NOTE: FOLLOW UP TO PO5008535  
LETTER FROM LORD JENKINS**

1. Lord Jenkins wrote to Lord Warner on 14 December about a letter he received from Mr [GRO-A], about haemophilia patients who were inadvertently infected with HIV and Hepatitis C through blood products. In his letter Mr [GRO-A] requests copies of minutes of the NBTS, NBA and Haemophilia Centre Directors meetings.
2. Mr [GRO-A] has written to the Department on numerous occasions, he would like access to these papers as part of an on-going campaign calling for a public inquiry into why so many patients were infected with HIV and Hepatitis C through contaminated blood and blood products.
3. Unfortunately, in this case the reply from Lord Warner to Lord Jenkins was drafted by the correspondence unit using a number of standard lines, and the reply did not fully address the points raised in the letter. It also left Lord Jenkins with the impression that we had inadequate file records. Lord Jenkins rang Sir Nigel's office to take up the issue of the Department's filing and document management system.
4. The draft letter seeks to reassure Lord Jenkins that DH does operate an effective records management system. We have also used this opportunity to give Lord Jenkins a fuller response to his letter.

Blood Policy Team  
28 February 2005

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Jenkins of Roding

I have been advised that you recently contacted Sir Nigel's office about my letter dated 27 January. I understand that you expressed concern about the Department's filing and record management systems.

I would firstly like to correct the impression I may have given that we hold no records on the treatment of haemophilia patients, blood safety and related issues. The Department of Health has a Departmental Records Office (DRO) that holds closed files on these areas. These files have been subject to a branch review.

Clearly, keeping good records is fundamental to the day to day running of the Department. We recognise that much of the work we do has long term consequences and accurate records are essential if future users are to be able to see why certain decisions were made, or why certain things did or did not happen. This is a message that is regularly communicated and reinforced to staff.

Mr **GRO-A** refers to what he calls a secret Westminster report. Officials have established that this refers to the document entitled "*Haemophilia Centre Directors' Hepatitis Working Party Report for year 1980-81*". A copy was attached to the letter I sent you. The paper indicates the existence of non-A and non-B hepatitis (NANBH), and that in the 1970's treatment with blood clotting factor concentrates carried a risk of infection with NANBH (what we now know as hepatitis C).

Unfortunately, in the 1970s and early 1980's, before effective viral inactivation procedures had been developed, many patients with haemophilia were inadvertently infected with hepatitis C from contaminated blood products.

The prevailing opinion among clinicians at the time was that NANBH caused a mild and often asymptomatic illness. The more serious consequences of hepatitis C, which may take 20-30 years to develop, only became apparent after full characterisation of the virus in 1989 and the development of tests for its recognition.

The paper does not show that anyone acted wrongly in the light of the facts and measures that were available to them at the time. I believe that Mr **GRO-A** has been campaigning for a public inquiry. However, as previously stated, the Government does not accept that any wrongful practices were employed at the time and does not consider that a public inquiry can be justified.

Mr **GRO-A** has requested copies of minutes from the National Blood Authority (NBA) and Haemophilia Centre Directors Hepatitis Working Party. I would like to suggest that Mr **GRO-A** contacts the NBA and United Kingdom Haemophilia Centre Directors Organisation directly. They are deemed to be the "holders" of these minutes.



With regards to the reference to minutes of the NBTS. Officials have identified files on the Advisory Committee on the National Blood Transfusion Service which was established in 1980. The first meeting was held on 1 December 1980. It would be helpful if Mr **GRO-A** could confirm firstly if it is the papers for this Advisory Committee that he would like to see and secondly if he could be specific about the period and issues that he is interested in, before officials make an assessment on the release of documents. Mr **GRO-A** should contact William Cannon who is based at Skipton House, 80 London Road, London SE1 6LH should he wish to pursue his enquiries.

**LORD WARNER**