

18th November 2021

Dear Sir Brian,

I am writing to inform you of the latest developments from The Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO).

SaBTO advises UK ministers and health departments on the most appropriate ways to ensure safety of blood, cells, tissues and organs for transfusion/transplantation.

The introduction of newer technologies and other scientific and clinical advances may identify new pathogens that may be transmitted by blood, blood products and other substances of human origin, or identify some donors who have the potential to transmit disease that was not detectable by currently used technologies.

As such, the committee is planning to set up a working group to agree principles for lookback investigations in such cases where newer technologies and other scientific and clinical advances have taken place. The working group will advise on the conduct of lookback studies in the UK, where there is concern that treatments may have inadvertently transmitted disease to patients. When agreed by the committee, the recommendations will be made to Ministers.

The committee is beginning the process of agreeing Terms of References for the group, and ensuring the right expertise is involved, including legal and ethical expertise and patient representation. We would be pleased to receive any advice you might offer and hope you do not feel that we are trespassing on any aspect of the Inquiry.

SaBTO will keep the Inquiry informed as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

Prof James Neuberger

Chair of SaBTO