

Correspondence Section

From: J Rutherford CA OPU2

Date: March 1993

Copy: Dr Rejman HC(M)2

POH(3)4070/88

The tone of this letter suggests that the correspondent might think that private hospitals get "free" blood at the expense of the NHS. We occasionally receive correspondence on these lines.

The National Blood Transfusion Service supplies blood to both NHS and private hospitals with 2-4% of the supply going to the private sector. No charge is made for the blood itself but since 1984 private hospitals have paid a handling charge to cover the expense to the NHS of supplying them.

We have avoided giving the handling charges. These vary between Regional Transfusion Centres and also by the individual components of blood. Costing and pricing structures vary considerably and this is one of the problems that will be tackled by the new National Blood Authority (NBA). Listing figures at present would raise more questions than answers and is not something we would wish to air in public before the NBA has had an opportunity to work on the problem.

A suggested reply is attached.

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Mr F Denham

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Thank you for your letter of 7 March about the supply of blood and plasma to hospitals in the private sector.

Since 1984 private hospitals have paid a handling charge by which the NHS has sought to recover the cost of collecting, testing, processing and transporting the blood and plasma it has supplied to them.

No charge is made for the blood and plasma. These are freely given by our voluntary donors for the benefit of all patients who need them. The handling charges vary across the country as each Regional Transfusion Centre has different costs and charges are set to recover these.

TOM SACKVILLE