

Mr Malone-Lee ME

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From: J C Dobson EHF1

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PROPOSED NATIONAL BLOOD AUTHORITY

1. I attach an analysis, prepared by Mr Canavan and Mr Rutherford, of the response to the DH consultation paper on the proposed National Blood Authority (NBA). The main points seem to me to be:

(i) Harold Gunson has clearly under-estimated the extent of opposition among RTC Directors (the group whose support is most crucial to implementing change) to the detail of the proposals, especially on the role of the NBA as a central contracting authority. On the other hand the overall concept of an NBA with greater leadership and influence than the present Directorate seems to be accepted.

(ii) Ron Wing has given the unfortunate impression that members of the existing CBLA will take all the key roles in the new NBA. As a result we think he has ruled himself out as an acceptable chairman for the NBA.

(iii) Of other groups, Chairmen are worried at the politics and proposed speed of implementation (and want to raise with SofS at the meeting on 20 November); RGMs have not formed a collective view; only Regional Directors of public health are opposed on principle to the basic ideas in the paper.

2. Given this response, I think it would be wrong to press ahead with the original proposals unamended and timescale (implementation by 1 April). Instead I suggest we should, subject to Ministers' agreement;

(i) set up a working group with Dr Gunson, representative RTC directors, and perhaps one regional DPH to review the detailed mechanisms proposed in our paper while retaining the concept of an influential NBA;

(ii) make clear to Chairmen and others that implementation will be shelved until this group has reported, and is

unlikely now to be before 1 September 1992;

(iii) convey tactfully to Ron Wing the message that, even if the concept of the NBA survives, he is unlikely to be its first chairman.

3. If you agree, we will (i) draft a suitable submission to Ministers, with a reply for SofS to send to Sir Michael Carlisle and briefing for the meeting on 20 November; and (ii) arrange to meet Ron Wing to break the news (unless you would prefer to do this yourself).

Happy to discuss if you would like.

GRO-C

for MR J C DOBSON
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