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PS/Mr MacKay

Copy to: PS/SHHD  
Mr Walker  
Dr Scott  
Director, SIO

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS)

1. My minute of 11 July 1983 described an information leaflet on AIDS for distribution by the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service. Mr MacKay may wish to note that distribution started on 2 September. SIO issued a notice on the same day, but the Scottish Press has shown no interest.
2. Following my last minute, however, you wrote (12 July) that Mr MacKay had enquired whether the surplus capacity at the Protein Fractionation Centre (PFC) could be used to increase UK production of Factor VIII.
3. The Blood Products Laboratory (BPL) at Elstree meets about 50% of the demand for Factor VIII in England and Wales, the remainder being imported. The limiting factor at present, however, is the plasma available to the BPL. Re-development of the BPL to make England and Wales self-sufficient is scheduled for completion in 1986 at a cost of £21m. We understand that the Blood Transfusion Service in England and Wales has plans to increase its plasma stock, as will clearly be necessary, and if this is likely to exceed concurrent BPL processing capacity we will discuss with DHSS whether the PFC could process the surplus. Such a step would not be possible without some capital investment in additional facilities for storage, filling, packaging etc at PFC, and would also result in increased running costs.
4. A further difficulty is that recently production at the PFC has been adversely affected by construction work required by the Medicines Inspector and this will continue into 1984. As a result a backlog of plasma for processing has built up and temporary overtime arrangements will be needed to clear the backlog. We understand that the situation will not lead to a shortage of products such as Factor VIII: standing procedures allow for sufficient stocks on the shelf to meet periods of difficulty. The developing situation at the PFC will obviously be a factor in considering whether plasma from the BPL can be processed.

GRO-C

J G DAVIES  
4 October 1983

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