

Richard Gutowski

19/09/2003 09:41

thm 19

To: Graham Bickler/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] Hugh
Nicholas/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] David Reay/POLICY/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
cc: Vicki King/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] Zubeda
Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] Jill Taylor/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] David
Daley/COMMS/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
Subject: Chisholm in hepatitis pledge

Graham

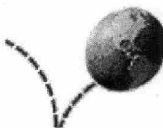
You should be aware of this. The driving force behind the call for a public enquiry is a document that purports to be a note of a meeting of Haemophilia Centre Directors, at which the DoH was present, which took place in 1982. We have not seen a copy of this document and it is not in our files. The Haemophilia Action Group which has obtained this note has in the past refused to release it to us. This supposedly records that the existence of non-B and Non-A hepatitis in the blood supply was known at the time and that it was serious enough to warrant monitoring. The Action Group's argument is therefore that the Department knew of the risk, knowingly allowed contaminated blood to be used, did not inform patients of the risk and as such they are liable and should pay large amounts of compensation.

Our position is that it was 1985 when non-hep A and b came to light and we started to take measures. We have a strong line in that the virus was unknown, it could not be grown and there was no test available. In addition it has to be remembered that at the time there was no alternative and not to have given Haemophiliacs the blood would have led to early and painful death. But this document could cause some embarrassment particularly as it now looks as if it will come into the public domain.

This issue is at the moment concentrated in Scotland but will clearly cross the border so we must get our lines straight. I will put in hand some defensive work once we have the document. I can see marches down Whitehall and protests outside Richmond House on the horizon.

Richard

----- Forwarded by Richard Gutowski/MDA/DOH/GB on 19/09/2003 08:43 -----



David Daley

18/09/2003 16:17

To: Vicki King/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] Richard
Gutowski/MDA/DOH/GB@[GRO-C] Jill Taylor/PH6/DOH/GB@DOH,
Zubeda Seedat/PH6/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
cc: Michael Clarke/COMMS/DOH/GB@[GRO-C]
bcc:
Subject: Chisholm in hepatitis pledge

For information, this story is running reasonably high up on BBC Online. Seems the issue of a public enquiry won't go away. No doubt this will reach English media at some point.

David

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/3119052.stm>

David Daley
Press Officer
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