

D2/C193/42

Dr Evans

cc: Dr Sibellas
Dr Waiter

POSSIBLE ADVISORY GROUP ON HEPATITIS

As you know, it has been in my mind for several months to get together an outside group of experts to act as An Advisory Group on Hepatitis. We have some difficult problems to resolve on NHS staff who are carriers of the hepatitis B antigen and of the risks to health staff and others who handle individuals in whom the carrier rate is particularly high. There are also recurring problems about use of apparatus (for example, jet guns) and I expect this disease to produce more than its share of problems in the next few years. At present we are getting ad hoc advice from various people, such as Sir Robert Williams or Professor Zukerman, but we have no body to which we can turn for formal guidance.

Dr Sibellas, Dr Waiter and I had all been considering the possible composition of such a group and you may like to see the list of individuals suggested by Drs Sibellas and Waiter. On the whole I think that this would be a reasonable beginning, though there could be some changes here and there, but it would be wrong to proceed with work on this unless there is a reasonable prospect of establishing such a body.

This may not be the time to ask about a new advisory group, particularly if we are proposing to be extremely restricted in the amount of advice which we give to the field, but if there is an infectious disease for which such a group is needed, this is it.

I would be glad of your advice as to whether to go ahead or not.

GRO-C

5 July 1979

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After discussion with CMO and the DeMos, I confirm that we should go ahead to ~~the~~ Take professional advice on the serious & pressing problems relating to hepatitis, particularly those relating to so-called carriers of Australia antigen. Perhaps we now could discuss the title and T.O.R.

GRO-C 13/7