

Hepatitis B. Antigen (HB Ag)

Following distribution of RTD(73)18, it was pointed out that inclusion of new donors bled in prisons, borstals etc., (para 6) under the heading "New Donors" (para 2) of the form used to report results might bias the apparent incidence of HBAG in "New Donors" (para 2). It has also been suggested that the incidence of antigen may be high among members of the Armed Forces.

The returns summarised in RTD(73)18 have been re-examined and figures for those months in which inmates of prisons, borstals etc. or members of the Armed Forces were bled have been subtracted.

The adjusted figures for "New Donors" for all RTCs and the range (in brackets), together with corresponding figures for inmates of prisons and members of the Armed Forces are shown below.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>HB Ag</u>	<u>HB Ab</u>
<u>New Donors</u>	33,374	1/1076 (1/520-1/3059)	1/700 (1/45-0/5817)
<u>Inmates of Prisons</u>	5,517	1/212 (1/45 - 1/500)	1/1163 (0/887-1/1000)
<u>Armed Forces</u>	6,673	1/953 (1/270-0/1888)	1/2224 (1/225-1/1888)

It seems clear that the incidence of antigenaemia among donors who are inmates of prisons, borstals etc. is higher than among other donors.

The range of results for other categories shown above and also in RTD(73)18 is large. In some instances this may be due to the fact that the numbers tested are small. More likely factors are the quality of reagents and the techniques of testing. Population differences between regions may play a part.

18th September 1973