

NOTE OF AN AD HOC MEETING OF REGIONAL TRANSFUSION DIRECTORS HELD ON 23 JANUARY 1980
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

PRESENT: Dr G H Tovey (Chairman)
Dr G W G Bird
Dr H H Gunson
Dr J Jenkins
Dr R S Lane
Dr W Wagstaff
Dr D Walford
Mr T E Dutton

1. NOTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - This was agreed.
2. UPDATING THE EVIDENCE ON THE NBTS PRESENTED TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Directors agreed that the aim in updating the document was to provide a statement of the Directors' views on the organisation, staffing, financing etc of the NBTS which could be placed before the Department. After discussion it was decided that the document should be presented to the Department through the medical channels with a recommendation that it should be considered as a matter of urgency. Dr Walford undertook to arrange this.

Dr Jenkins reiterated his view that there was now a need for some central organisation to take control of the NBTS and for a totally new method of financing the service to be devised which took account of the special features of the Service. It was agreed that the voluntary unpaid donor must remain the cornerstone of the NBTS, but that there might also need to be Centres specifically concerned with collecting plasma by plasmapheresis. Dr Lane expressed the view that the recent submission to Ministers on the future of the BPL may not have paid sufficient attention to the dependence of the laboratory on the Regional Centres and the need to ensure an adequate supply of plasma. He emphasised the need to recognise that BPL would always be in competition with industry and that it must be allowed sufficient flexibility to meet this challenge.

The uncertainty attached to the current assessment of albumin usage was discussed and it was agreed that regional groups should endeavour to get figures of current usage of albumin and grouping sera for as many Regions as possible. The usage of Factor VIII was currently thought to be about 60 million international units per annum, a figure which was probably sufficiently accurate for broad planning purposes provided a careful watch was kept on treatment trends.

Dr Lane explained that if the NHS was to become self-sufficient in blood products he would require at least 50% of his source material to be in the form of fresh frozen plasma. Dr Jenkins said that while he recognised that his Region might not be typical, there would be a requirement, if he was to be independent of commercial blood products, to take 130 donations by plasmapheresis daily in an addition to the normal level of ordinary donations. Dr Gunson mentioned that he was already collecting donations at a rate which represented 25% more than his Region's own requirements.

Directors accepted that there were a number of things which the NBTS might do to reduce the size of the task confronting the Service if it was to become self-sufficient in blood products. Improving yields would help to some extent and it was hoped that it might be possible to reduce the amount of blood which became time-expired.

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 15 February at 11 am.

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