

Rec'd in Section 3/12/75

H/H7/13

19A

Mr C G Taylor

BLOOD PRODUCTS - PURCHASE FROM COMMERCIAL FIRMS

1. We have agreed with the Scots to consider again the possibility of central purchase of blood products which the NHS is unable yet to supply in sufficient quantities. The products concerned, for practical purposes, are AHG concentrate and plasma protein fraction. So far as the latter is concerned we have no evidence of the extent of the unmet demand at the present time, if indeed there is one; but it appears certain that there will be one at some time in the not too distant future.
2. In the case of AHG concentrate we know approximately the size of the demand, and the extent to which hospitals have found it possible to meet it. What ideally we would like would be to purchase centrally the balance of the two existing central contracts and distribute the material through the NBS under a system of fair allocations. Given that we could not find the money to do as much as this in the current financial year, I am wondering whether we could nevertheless go part of the way. This would be tantamount to making further special allocations to the more important Haemophilia Centres, but on this round we would control the distribution of the material centrally. We should be justified in adopting exceptional arrangements because, as you know, the burden of treating all haemophiliacs for major episodes falls on a small number of Authorities.
3. We have, I should add, been under some heavy pressure in the Press and Parliament to provide the new treatment for haemophiliacs, and this is likely to continue.
4. To make a worthwhile contribution to the problem we should need to find funds of the order of, say, £200-300,000, part of which might fall in 1975/76. This would represent about one quarter of the total annual requirements (hospitals having taken up about one half).

GRO-C

B O B Gidden
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2 September 1974

cc Mr Brandes
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H/B13/6