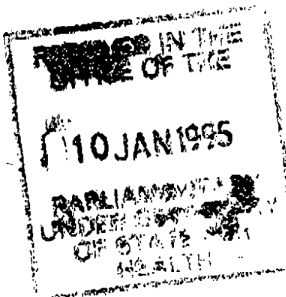


THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

From the Minister for Home Affairs and Health
The Rt Hon the Lord Fraser of Carmyllie QC



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9 January 1995

cc Ps/Minister
Mr Marsh
Ms Roughan Ps/Perm Sec
Mr Scotland CA over - to note x/
Dr Metters DCMO
Ms Ward ID - to note x/

Dear Tom,

HEPATITIS C

Thank you for your letter of 4 January.

I am glad that you have given the go ahead for a look-back exercise in England and I too hope that colleagues in Wales and Northern Ireland will also give similar approval.

While the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service is already under instruction to proceed I agree that there are benefits to be gained from a common UK approach and I have asked my officials to ensure that there is the maximum co-operation and harmonisation of arrangements.

I note that there is to be a Working Party to be set up and I confirm that I would wish Scottish clinicians to be involved. As you recognise the work already undertaken in Scotland and in particular with the pilot research study will be most useful to the Working Party and I am happy for this information to be made available. I hope that it will be possible to build on this work and thus enable the Working Party to make quick progress in producing guidance. It would be unfortunate and damaging if there was any significant delay on this.

X | With regard to an announcement, I am content for this to be made on a UK basis by an Inspired PQ. The Press Statement should indicate that I have asked the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service to take the look-back exercise forward in Scotland in consultation with the other Blood Transfusion Services in the UK. The SNBTS will issue a separate statement after 3.30pm on 11 January reassuring blood donors and patients while indicating the action to be taken in Scotland.

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I am glad that we are now moving forward on this issue. A copy of this letter has been sent to Rod Richards and Malcolm Moss.

GRO-C

FRASER OF CARMYLLIE

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