

## HEPATITIS ADVISORY GROUP

The decision to convene this Group was made in the light of the many problems which had been presented to the Department in relation to viral hepatitis. It had become evident that there was a real need to have access to expert advice on many aspects of the management of the condition.

Most of the problems associated with hepatitis A have been evident for many years and this infection would not of itself have justified the establishment of a special advisory body but hepatitis B has given rise to an increasing number of problems, not only in the field of blood transfusion and renal dialysis but also in its occupational aspects, both from the possibility of illness occurring in staff exposed to patient carriers and the risk to patients in contact with doctors and others who are carriers. Viral hepatitis resembling hepatitis B but due to infection neither with virus A nor B, has also been identified and is currently designated as non-A non-B viral hepatitis. There are problems relating to the management and prevention of non-A non-B hepatitis and it is not known how many causative agents there are.

In the past the Department has been able to receive advice from two Committees which have dealt with specialised aspects of hepatitis B; the Expert Group on Hepatitis in Dentistry and the Advisory Group on Testing for Hepatitis B Surface Antigen and its Antibody. Members of these bodies are members of the present Group.

At the request of the Health Departments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Group advises all the Departments in the United Kingdom, each of which has an officer present at meetings.

The terms of reference are:

"To provide medical advice to the Chief Medical Officers of the Health Departments of the United Kingdom on all aspects of communicable hepatitis."

A list of members is attached.

ADVISORY GROUP ON HEPATITIS: MEMBERSHIP

Sir Robert Williams

Dr G W G Bird, DSc PLd MB BS FRc Path

Dr D M S Dane FRCP FRCPATH

Dr T H Flewett MD FRCP MRCPATH

Dr W J Jenkins MD FRCPATH\*

Professor A C Kennedy MD FRCP

Dr R Lane MD MRCPATH

Dr E Holakoff MD

Dr R S Williams MD FRCP

Dr B H J Young (MD MRCP)

Professor A J Zuckerman MD DSc FRCPATH

\* For first meeting only - to be replaced by Dr Bird

The Advisory Group met for the first time on 3 October when it was agreed that the Advisory Group on Testing for the Presence of Hepatitis B Surface Antigen and its Antibody should become a sub-Committee of the Advisory Group on Hepatitis. It is expected that a ~~decision to~~ new Chairman of the Sub-Committee will be appointed <sup>at</sup> the next meeting of the Group on 5 December 1980.