



REGIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE
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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION HEADER SHEET

To: ADDRESSEE: National Directorate of the NBTS

FAX No. 061 236 0519

FOR THE ATTENTION OF: Dr H H Gunson

From: NAME OF SENDER Dawn
Dr Wagstaff's Secretary

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DATE: 5 February 1991

TIME: 12.30

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MESSAGE/ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

Please find enclosed a letter dictated by Dr Wagstaff, but sent in his absence.

On another point, Jill Magee, Secretary of the BBTS meeting in Nottingham, is absent from the centre today but I have left a message for her to contact you tomorrow re: Management Committee meeting in Nottingham in September.



WTD/ 2001

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5 February 1991

FAX

Dr H H Gunson
National Director
National Directorate of the NBTS
Gateway House
Piccadilly South
MANCHESTER
M60 7LP

Dear Harold

Many thanks for the minutes of the recent meeting of the UK Advisory Committee on Transfusion Transmitted Diseases. I think you are being too hard on yourself, so far as I can see they represent a very good record of what was actually discussed at the meeting.

My only suggestion would be a slight alteration on page 4 of these minutes. On two occasions, once halfway down the page and the other on the final line, you refer to repeat testing "after a six month period". Just in case someone might misinterpret this as meaning that six months should be the minimum period before testing is repeated, could I suggest that you alter this to say that tests should be repeated "no later than six months after the previous test".

With regard to your additional report on the further meeting between Philip Mortimer and Richard Tedder et al, it does indeed suggest that there may be a significant variation in the line which was discussed at the meeting of the Advisory Committee. The prospect of donors being entered into the counselling procedure on the basis of a positive RIBA alone is somewhat daunting as the RIBA test is currently only regarded by the manufacturers themselves as being a supplementary rather than a confirmatory test. Since our understanding on the tests themselves and the significance to donors is still somewhat unclear, I will be a little unhappy at embarking on such a procedure.

My own opinion is that we cannot put off anti-HCV screening for much longer, and I would have thought that your proposed date for national starting as end of June/mid July was quite reasonable under most circumstances. If the virologists can be persuaded to grasp the nettle for the first two or three months, then they would very soon accumulate enough information regarding the interrelationship between RIBA and PCR to enable a definitive decision to be made to drop the latter as a confirmatory test in the presence of an undoubted positive RIBA. This would presumably be the quickest way of the necessary data being accumulated, especially if

Consultant Medical Staff: Dr W Wagstaff, Dr R J Sokol, Dr V James, Dr K Forman
Chief Administrator: Mr P A Kemp, Regional Donor Organiser: Miss K Carter

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National Blood Transfusion Service
Sheffield

To Dr H H Gunson

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laboratory time and cash can be found to carry out the PCR testing on the 300 or so RIBA positives which will be thrown up during the first three months of testing (according to the calculations of Philip Mortimer et al).

In other words, my vote would be for the commencement of anti-HCV screening at the earliest possible opportunity, along the lines agreed at the meeting in Manchester. The tests now having been approved by FDA, I think we are leaving ourselves open to grave criticism if we delay much longer. If we are in any case all agreeing to put all repeat reactive donors on the back burner, then this gives the virologists a little breathing space to carry out PCR testing on the first 200-300 RIBA positives thrown at them so that they can advise us accordingly as to whether our flow charts should be changed. I would have thought that bringing the next scheduled meeting of the Committee forward from 25 March would only be necessary if the virologists are quite adamant that they would be unable to withstand a short, sharp attack on their organisation!

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

P.R. Dr W Wagstaff
DIRECTOR

WTD/ 2003