

NOTES OF THE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING

Monday, 18th March 1991

PRESENT: Dr McDougall (Chairman)
Dr Williamson
Dr Ouwehand
Mr Hawdon

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr Rankin

1. Matters Arising

a) Quality Assurance Staffing

Dr McDougall and Dr Williamson confirmed that discussions had taken place with Mr Slopecki regarding the revised staffing of the QA Department. The proposals, as agreed at the last meeting, appeared to be acceptable and Mr Slopecki would in due course be bringing forward his new proposals.

b) Anti HCV Testing

i. Dr Ouwehand expressed his concern that the RHA should provide additional funds to Districts to enable them to meet the higher charges for RTC products which would apply when Anti HCV Testing was introduced on 1st July 1991. At the same time the question of central funding from the Department of Health should also be pursued. The decision to commence testing had been made by the Department of Health and we had no option but to comply.

ii. Mr Hawdon raised the question of purchasing from Welcome Diagnostics the VK55 and the VK21 test kits for Hepatitis B and HIV. Under normal circumstances an order for twelve months would be placed which would attract an 8% discount. It had been decided for the time being not to place a twelve months contract but continue using this material for three months pending the decision whether changes should be made. Welcome Diagnostics would not offer any discount for this period but would agree to a 5½% discount for a period of six months. It was decided that as an interim measure a six months contract would be offered.

c. Transport - Emergency Deliveries

Following discussion at the last meeting, Mr Hawdon had investigated the slow response by the 'on call' driver. It appeared that on this occasion the driver called was the second 'on call' driver and the additional response time included the journey to the garage to pick up an official vehicle. In these circumstances the time taken was acceptable.

d. Staff Sickness

Dr McDougall reported on his discussions concerning the member of staff on long term sickness absence which, it was thought, would continue for some time. He reported on the course of action he was pursuing.

e. Laboratory Staffing

It was agreed that Mr Fletton be asked to provide within a week his view on the proposed revised structure for the Laboratories and his report on his own role within this new structure.

f. Gulf Crisis

In view of the high stocks resulting from the additional blood collection during the Gulf Crisis, blood being delivered to hospitals within the Region was a few days older than usual. This matter had been raised by Haematologists who preferred shorter dated blood. It was agreed that Dr Williamson would write to Haematologists explaining the situation and asking that they should accept the situation for the time being.

2. Plasma Products 1991-92

i. Dr Williamson reported on her discussions with Dr Moore following receipt of his letter dated 13th March 1991. The targets as indicated of 19,000 kgs recovered plasma and 1,900 Apheresed plasma was accepted. There would be some flexibility to convert Apheresed plasma into recovered plasma on a 2-1 basis but the overall target should remain the same. In view of the high investment which would be required to install an automated system and because the future intake of plasma by BPL was uncertain it was decided that the purchase of equipment for automation would be deferred.

ii. Later this week discussions with a representative of BPL will take place regarding the purchase of BPL products. Information was given that another Centre had requested tenders from BPL and commercial manufacturers.

3. Regional Tissue Bank

i. Dr McDougall gave details of correspondence on the setting up of a Working Group under Mr Michael Bush (Director of Public Health, East Suffolk) which would be considering the establishment of a Tissue Bank as a Regional Specialty. It was agreed that Dr Ouwehand would pursue this matter with Dr Pegg and that the correspondence would be circulated for information.

ii. Dr McDougall gave information on the possibility of the establishment of a commercial company providing porcine heart valves. It was thought that this could be established within the village of Papworth.

4. Computer Consortium

i. Dr Rankin gave details of the Computer Consortium meeting held on 28th February 1991. It was confirmed that the Wessex RTC would not now be joining the Consortium. Some enquiries had been received from the North West RTC. Details were given of changes to product labelling which would operate from 1st April 1992. It was agreed that Mr Fletton be asked to oversee the changes to labelling.

ii. At the meeting it was announced by Dr Moore that the charging for inter regional transfers of blood and blood products would no longer be handled by the National Directorate. Each RTC would be responsible for its own invoicing.

iii. Dr Rankin reported that Cambridge were being asked to confirm their annual contribution of £63,000 to the Consortium budget and were also being asked to provide an additional £7,000 to employ a Quality Assurance Manager for the Consortium. Some unease was expressed over the management and financial arrangements for the Consortium. A considerable increase in funding had arisen in the three years since Cambridge joined. Dr Ouwehand gave details and his views on the possibility of a link-up with an Oxford RTC computerised system for antenatal work. It would appear that the Consortium were not in favour of this system. He would, however, be taking up this matter with Dr Robinson, Chairman of the Consortium.

iv. In view of the concern expressed over the management/financial management of the Consortium it was agreed that Dr McDougall would discuss this matter with Dr Moore of the National Directorate to investigate the possibility of a management audit.

5. MCA Inspection Report

It was reported that the response to the MCA Inspection had now been sent. Some concern had been expressed over the laboratory cleaning but Dr Williamson reported that this matter had now been resolved.

6. Laboratories Monthly Reports

It was decided that the monthly laboratory reports should no longer be produced. Each consultant had examined the statistics for their own areas of responsibility and had concluded that the information was available on computer systems. The savings in staff time could be more usefully employed.

7. Internal Post

It was agreed to establish a central distribution point for departmental internal correspondence from the Post Room. Mr Hawdon would arrange.

8. Any Other Business

a) Supplies of Products for Research - Charging

Dr Ouwehand expressed concern that invoices were not being raised quickly enough for products supplied to research institutes. Mr Hawdon said that this was a matter of some concern. Invoices were raised on our behalf by the RHA Accounts Department and he will be taking up this matter with the RHA Management Accountant. A better arrangement would be for the RTC to raise invoices direct.

b) Computer Training

Dr Ouwehand suggested that a number of senior staff would benefit from computer training and that introductory courses should be arranged for those concerned. Mr Hawdon would assess this matter with Robin Lambert.

c) RTC Maintenance

Dr Ouwehand said that he considered it unnecessary to incur expenditure on flooring repairs to laboratories scheduled for refurbishment. Taking account of the Health and Safety aspect and the hazard to staff, it was agreed that minor repairs should be undertaken when such hazards exist.

d) RTC Autoclaves

i. Dr Williamson said that no progress had been made following the decision to dispense with the main sterilising suite and felt that action should be taken as soon as possible. It was agreed that Mr Fletton be asked to pursue this matter and report. Mr Hawdon said some interest had been expressed in one of the autoclaves and he was following up this with an attempt to have all three removed at the same time and without cost.

e) Medical Staffing

Dr Williamson reported that she had recently learned that Dr J P Allain would be taking up his appointment on 29th March 1991.

f) Regional Tissue Specialty - Tissue Typing

Dr Ouwehand asked that an enquiry be made to the RHA regarding their plans for HLA typing to remain as a Regional Specialty. When the present Consultant retires in three years it would make sense if this service was integrated with the RTC.

9. Date of Next Meeting

In view of the annual leave commitments, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Management Group should be held on Monday, 8th April 1991 at 10 a.m.

18th March 1991

DH/JB