



Dr. M. CONTRERAS
Chief Executive – Medical Director

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

NORTH LONDON BLOOD TRANSFUSION CENTRE
COLINDALE AVENUE
LONDON
NW9 5BG

Telephone: 0181-200 7777
Fax: 0181-200 3994

Dr Angela Robinson
Medical Director
The National Blood Authority
Oak House
Reeds Crescent
Watford
Herts WD1 1QH

PEH/mm/robins2

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Dear Angela

HCV look-back: recipients who are foreign nationals

I mentioned this problem to you over the telephone, and you undertook to raise it at the next MSBT Sub Group Meeting.

Briefly, through the look-back exercise we have identified a number of recipients who are foreign nationals and came to the UK specifically for treatment in the private sector. During the course of the medical treatment (usually cardiac surgery), blood transfusions were given. In the cases which have come to my attention so far, we have been provided with a patient address and the name of a referring clinician or general practitioner in the relevant country.

I would be grateful for confirmation that the Department of Health wishes us to pursue these foreign nationals as part of the look-back exercise. We made no distinction in the HIV look-back, and we included foreign nationals living abroad in the exercise. My one concern about the HCV look-back is that a number of the recipients reside in countries where the prevalence of hepatitis C infection is much greater than in the UK. Obviously, this situation is largely confined to the London Transfusion Centres, and particularly NLBTC, bearing in mind the hospitals served.

I have taken no action with respect to these foreign nationals and will continue to hold the documentation until the Department gives a response.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Patricia E Hewitt
Acting Medical Director

