

Hewson Nicola

From: Hewitt Patricia
To: Hewson Nicola
Subject: RE: HIV pos donors
Date: 12 December 2002 16:46

Thanks Nicky.

This is very helpful. I have now put all the data together into a paper for BTSAG, which will also be sent to all TMCG members for info.

We will continue to see examples of your first two (bisexual) donors, whatever we do. But more recently we have seen donors who should not have been bled, if the interview process was working properly. I am very concerned that there is pressure to introduce HIV NAT, on the assumption that the "window period" risk is increasing, when there is no evidence of this. I fancy that many of the donors detected this year were not recent infections, and I don't think there is any evidence that window period risk has changed. But the donors could have been screened out at selection!

Pat

-----Original Message-----

From: Hewson Nicola
Sent: 12 December 2002 15:56
To: Hewitt Patricia
Cc: Moore Christine - Colindale
Subject: RE: HIV pos donors

Thanks Pat. Yes I agree that something does not add up here. The way the female donor spoke at interview led us to believe that the test was done as a routine prior to termination but I now understand that it is unlikely that the HIV test at the time of the termination was done as a routine, so I suspect that she may have been concerned about her status at this time. As far as the test that they both had together at the end of 2001 is concerned I felt that they were just being cautious at the relative beginning of their relationship and wanted to eliminate the risk of HIV at that point. The impression that we got (but which may well be incorrect) was that the male was the "innocent party" and indeed he is the one with recent infection. Both of these donors were referred to the GU department at the same hospital where they apparently had their negative HIV tests. We have drawn this to the attention of the GU clinician who will look into their patient records to confirm any details of previous tests. So it will be interesting to see if anything comes out of this!

We've had 4 HIV positive donors in total this year (we usually have only one). As regards the 2 donors earlier this year. The first was a regular donor who had given blood 9 times in total (the previous donation was in 1997). He is bisexual which appears to be his only risk, having had about 5 male partners since '97. One of his partners later disclosed that he had HIV infection. The donor had a negative HIV test in November '99 at his local GU clinic which the clinic doctor confirmed.

The final donor was also a regular donor who gave blood 27 times in total, his previous donation being in May 2000. He is married (separated) with a child of 3 years. Bisexual with numerous partners in past few years including a couple of partners from Hong Kong. Archive sample from '97 donation was negative.

I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if you need any more info.

Best Wishes
Nicky

From: Hewitt Patricia
To: Hewson Nicola
Cc: Moore Christine - Colindale

Subject: RE: HIV pos donors
Date: 12 December 2002 14:08

Nicky

The more I think about this, the stranger it is!

I don't think many of our new female donors would have had 2 HIV tests in the previous year. And why was she tested again at the time of her abortion when she had a negative test in late 2001? Even if it is offered routinely to all women having an abortion (is that a policy, I wonder) wouldn't most women have said "I had a neg test last year, so don't need another one"? So either they are jolly good at persuading people to be tested or she had a reason to think she needed testing. Did you get an opportunity to explore this? And the fact that the male had been tested in association with a GUM infection, and she was tested as well (why test her if he was negative? OR why offer her a test before knowing his result). It doesn't really add up, does it, unless they both have been living "on the edge" and recognise this.

I suppose there could be other factors (her residence in South Africa could have been recognised as a risk), but in our experience the mention of previous testing outside blood donation rings alarm bells.

Very interesting.

Best wishes

Pat

-----Original Message-----

From: Hewson Nicola
Sent: 09 December 2002 16:00
To: Hewitt Patricia
Subject: RE: HIV pos donors

Hi Pat

I did not know you wanted this info so sorry I have not replied earlier. We had 2 HIV pos donors who gave blood last month (and 2 more earlier this year but before changes to donor selection procedures). The 2 donors last month gave consecutive donations and are actually a couple. They have been together for 18 months and both denied another partner during this time. They both had tattoos in summer 2001 but they apparently both had a negative HIV test in late 2001 (because the male had a GU infection of some sort). The female also apparently had another negative HIV test in July 2002 at the time of an abortion. The GU specialist we referred them to is going to check their previous records for details of HIV tests. The male's infection was reported as 'recent' by NTMRL. No IVDU nor anything else. They were both new donors (the female lived in South Africa until a year or so ago and donated blood there until she stopped in '97 because of problematic veins).

I note your concerns about the new system.

Hope this is helpful.

Best Wishes

Nicky

From: Hewitt Patricia
To: Hewson Nicola
Subject: HIV pos donors
Date: 09 December 2002 11:26

Dear Nicky

I haven't had a reply about the HIV pos donors in Sheffield. I am not sure which days you work, but would appreciate a reply.

How many have you had?

What was the risk?

Should they have donated: was there a problem in understanding or something else?

Were they new donors.?

We are concerned that nearly all the HIV positives this year have appeared after the changes to donor selection procedures, where the lifestyle questions are no longer read out to the donors. Might just be a coincidence.

Pat