

Present: Professor J.P. Allain  
Dr. S.M. McDougall  
Dr. Lorna Williamson

Apologies for absence: Mr. D. Hawdon  
Dr. W. Ouwehand

1. MINUTES OF MEETING, 24TH JUNE 1991
2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES

Dr. McDougall raised two further items which had been discussed at the NBTS Management Committee -

- i) COSSH data sheets for Blood Products had been produced by a small group consisting of Drs. Harrison, Lubenko and Williamson. Once approved at National level these will be implemented.
- ii) Black and white labels. Some instructions regarding these had appeared, and will be dealt with by Mr. Fletton.

Another item mentioned by Dr. McDougall - Inter-regional transfers of blood would continue to be charged at local rates, but this may change in 1992.

#### Further Matters Arising from the Minutes

##### Item 7. Research Foundation

Mr. Williamson from the RHA had not yet been available to discuss this matter.

##### Item 9. Centralised Filing for CVs Received by Speculative Applicants

Professor Allain wished it to be noted that he had not yet seen any of the "number of applications" mentioned in the previous minutes.

##### Item 10. Centrifuge Accident

Dr. McDougall commented that we should pursue the Department of Health with some vigour if we wish them to respond quickly on this Health and Safety issue.

3. SECTOR TRAVEL BUDGETS - see Item 10

4. **IMPLICATIONS OF ANTENATAL COMPUTERISATION ON OVERALL ESTABLISHED COMPUTER PLANS**

Professor Allain reported that the decision had not yet been taken whether to buy the Oxford System or the ACT programs. Oxford was at present too expensive, but the ACT system was not fully established. It was felt that a broader consideration of the computer needs of the Diagnostic and Research Departments and Reagents was required. The pros and cons of remaining within the Consortium were discussed and both Professor Allain and Dr. Williamson felt that on cost considerations if no other it was preferable to remain within the Consortium for the foreseeable future. However, it was agreed that Professor Allain would contact Dr. Ala from the Birmingham BTS, who has a close link with ACT, to discuss future planning. Dr. McDougall thought that Drs. Wagstaff, Fraser and Colonel Thomas would be able to provide useful advice and Dr. Williamson undertook to telephone Dr. Wagstaff on this matter.

5. **RECRUITMENT STRATEGY**

Dr. Williamson reported on a visit by herself and Professor Allain to Mr. David Reardon, Department of Haematology at Addenbrooke's to discuss the recruitment of trainees. A discussion took place on the pros and cons of graduate versus school leaver entry. Whilst it was felt that the personal potential of the applicant was more important than across the board qualifications, it was felt worth pursuing the links mentioned by David Reardon to recruit sandwich students from various polytechnics and universities. Dr. Williamson undertook to continue discussions with David Reardon on this matter.

6. **COMPUTER NETWORKING - MEMO FROM ROBIN LAMBERT**

In view of the discussion under Item 4 this was deferred until a fuller meeting could be set up.

The Executive Committee were then joined by Drs. Voak, Rankin and Caffrey for the Senior Staff Meeting, and by Mr. Slopecki for Items 8 and 9.

7. **RTC AUTOCLAVES AND VACUTAINERS**

Dr. Williamson produced a report on investigations into the autoclaving needs of the Centre. The Executive Committee broadly agreed with the conclusions of the report, i.e. that one clean and one dirty autoclave should be retained to allow maximum flexibility in the future. The final costs of removing two autoclaves was awaited, as was their scrap valuation.

As regards Vacutainers, Dr. Williamson produced an interim report and commented that she had not been able to do a full costing due to incomplete information on staff savings on the Antenatal side. Dr. Caffrey reported that the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital had recently switched to Vacutainers and also pointed out that there may be a problem with labelling of Antenatal samples because the tubes which we require to fit into the automated grouping machines were non-standard sizes. Dr. Voak commented that if we wished to continue screening pregnant sera for HLA antibodies a clotted sample would be required as well as an EDTA tube. Antenatals had not finally decided whether a one or two-tube system was best. Professor Allain therefore felt that a final decision should be made by one week after the return of Dr. Ouwehand from holiday, which in turn should be implemented by the 1st August 1991.

#### 8. **QUALITY STAFFING**

Mr. Slopecki had produced a report outlining the tasks which could be undertaken by various grades of staff in order to maintain the Quality System. Considerable discussion took place on the benefits of various types of recruits and training. Dr. Voak was concerned that any move to total graduate entry would potentially reduce staff stability and therefore result in loss of expertise. Professor Allain commented that the quality of staff was critical to any future developments within the Centre and it was important to produce the right blend of service work with R & D. It was generally agreed that the work of the Centre was vastly different from that of a Haematology Department in that novel, interesting material coming through was a much rarer event. It was felt that as vacancies arose the grade of replacement required should be carefully considered before an appointment made. Alan Slopecki commented that he felt that the BBTS and CPSM training for MLAs was too prescriptive. At Professor Allain's request, Alan Slopecki will re-write the document, beginning with 'Tasks to be undertaken' and thereafter the grade and number of staff needed to carry them out.

#### 9. **AIR CONDITIONING FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE LABORATORY**

This was agreed in principle and Professor Allain commented that air conditioning may require to be installed in other laboratories also.

#### 10. **SECTOR TRAVEL BUDGETS**

These were all now to hand. It was agreed that the budget for on-call travelling expenses would be top-sliced and not contained within Sectors.

#### 11. **LABORATORY REFURBISHMENT**

This was within the estimated budget and therefore was approved to be implemented.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Dr. Caffrey raised concerns about the external image of the Centre, particularly relating to the manner and efficiency of the Switchboard and especially when dealing with calls from donors. Professor Allain agreed that he was also concerned about the attitude of the Switchboard and that the fact that messages do not always get through to the right person. He also commented that the Reception Area did not present a good image of the Centre and needed to be improved. He felt that Secretaries should receive training in handling calls according to the wishes of the Head of Sector and Dr. McDougall pointed out that clear instructions would have to be given to Switchboard and Secretaries to avoid problems. It was agreed that Dr. Caffrey and Mr. Hawdon would conduct a feasibility study into the physical appearance of the Reception Area, with costs. This may include 'In/Out' boards for Senior Staff. It was felt that Dr. Caffrey would be an appropriate person to advise present and any future Switchboard employees on external communications.

12.2 Dr. Rankin produced Hepatitis C Information Sheets for donors, as originally generated by Dr. Gillon at the Edinburgh RTC. She also reported that the Abbott Commander System was not yet geared to provide electronic transfer of data and that there were problems with linear stacking. Professor Allain reported that no decision had yet been made on which Hepatitis C test to use and this would be done once a thousand donors from the clinical samples had been tested.

12.3 Dr. Williamson reported that Dr. Seah Lim, Senior Registrar in Haematology at Addenbrooke's, would be coming on secondment to the Centre for six months beginning 15th July. Professor Allain suggested that he could be accommodated in the Q.A. Laboratory. Professor Allain and Dr. Williamson will be seeing Dr. Lim this week to discuss his programme and it was suggested that Mr. Slopecki join them on that occasion.

12.4 Dr. Williamson returned the document on potential employment of persons known to be HIV-Positive. This will circulate round Senior Staff and be discussed on a future occasion.

12.5 Dr. Ouwehand had sent in a revised application from Nigel Clark for funding to support a two-year M.Sc. course of study at Brunel University, this time including travel costs. The total required would be about £1,100 per year for two years. This was approved in principle and it was agreed that two-thirds of the total costs would be funded by the Centre and one-third by Mr. Clark himself.

Dr. Williamson will write to Mr. Clark to let him know of the Committee's decision.

12.6 Dr. Williamson requested permission to stop issuing blood greater than 21 days old to Hospitals. This was partly to assess the feasibility of this prior to studies on the 20<sup>0</sup> hold method of component production to reduce the incidence of yersinia infection. This was agreed in principle, except for rare groups, and would be monitored closely over the next two months to establish what loss of income, if any, resulted from this change.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday, 15th July 1991, at 10 a.m.

LW/cmh  
2nd July 1991  
medexlju

A Meeting of the Executive Committee  
will be held on Monday, 1st July 1991 at 10 a.m.

\*The meeting will be joined by all Senior Staff at 11 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the previous meeting - Held on 24 June 1991.
2. Matters arising
3. Sector Travelling Budgets
4. Implications of Antenatal Computerisation on Overall Established Computer Plans
5. Recruitment Strategy
6. Computer Networking - Robin Lambert's memo to Executive Committee Members refers
7. Autoclaves Progress Report - Dr Williamson
8. Staffing to Achieve Quality Management
9. Air Conditioning Requirements - QC Laboratory G51  
Mr Slopecki's memo refers (attached)
10. Sector Staffing
11. Minor Refurbishment of Antenatal, Reagents and Other Laboratories - Costs (attached)
12. Any Other Business
13. Date of Next Meeting - Monday, 15 July 1991 at 10 a.m.

\*Dr Caffrey  
Dr Rankin  
Dr Voak

DNH/JB  
27 June 1991