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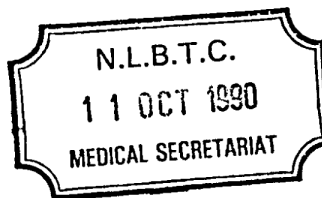
# The Royal Free Hospital

Telephone

GRO-C

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

1 October 1990



GDS/gw

Dr M Brennan  
Locum Consultant  
National Blood Transfusion Service  
North London Blood Transfusion Centre  
Colindale Avenue  
NW9 5BG

Dear Dr Brennan,

Thank you for your letter of 26 September 1990, and your invitation. I would indeed be interested in assessing anti HCV positive-blood donors as previously discussed with the Blood Transfusion Service. In view of the fact that we do not know the precise natural history and expression of hepatitis C in donors with normal versus abnormal serum aminotransferases, it is prudent to assess all donors with a positive anti-HCV test. Recent data from Spain has suggested that a proportion of such donors may indeed have histological hepatic abnormalities.

Some donors with normal transaminases may be in a phase of hepatitis C during which the disease is in remission, but may in fact later have a biochemical relapse. Data such as HCV RNA will be interesting in such donors.

I would like to suggest that we work out the details of the manner in which patients are to be referred and assessed. It is probable that General Practitioners would like to be kept informed of their patient's status, but donors with anti-HCV should not be lost between referral from the blood bank and general practitioner.

There are other issues involved, and no doubt the news of a positive test will generate some anxiety in many patients. We envisage setting up an appointment system whereby myself and a nursing sister would see each patient, take an appropriate history and physical examination and recommend further steps that the patient could consider. In those patients who appear to have benign disease, clinical investigations would be limited. A proportion of those patients with progressive disease may benefit from antiviral therapy.

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I would be happy to meet with the blood bank persons concerned to work out the details of the system so that we can proceed in a manner mindful of the relationship of the blood bank service to its donors. I am sure that with the assistance of expertise available to the blood bank, we will obtain instructive information in this cohort.

Please let me know when it would be suitable to set up the meeting to organise further details.

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

Dr G Dusheiko  
Reader in Medicine/Honorary Consultant

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