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NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

National Director:
H.H. GUNSON, DSc MD FRCP FRCP(Ed) FRC Path.

Deputy Director (Administration):
R.J. MOORE, PhD CEng MIM FIQA



THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE
GATEWAY HOUSE
PICCADILLY SOUTH
MANCHESTER M60 7LP.

Tel: [REDACTED]

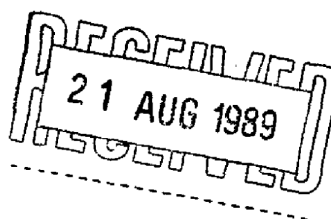
Fax: [REDACTED]

HHG/LB

18th August 1989

LETTER TO: All RTD's - England and Wales

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Dear

After I had sent my letter to you earlier this week I realised I had omitted to mention two topics which may currently be the subject of communications to you from commercial firms.

Both of these topics, viz; anti-HIV 1 and 2 and anti-HCV tests can be dealt with from a policy aspect on a similar basis.

It is important that we act in a co-ordinated manner nationally and also with Scotland with the introduction of these tests with respect to the routine screening of donations. There will have to be approval of the DH before they are introduced and the means for obtaining this is the agreement of the DH's Committee on the Virological Safety of Blood. This meets next on 17th October 1989.

With respect to anti-HIV 1 and 2 tests, I do not think that there is an urgent need to use this test since there is no evidence from our present selective screening that HIV 2 is a problem. I should be interested in learning if you have had approaches from firms other than Wellcome (I am meeting their representatives next week) and the price per test that is being offered and how this compares with the cost of your current anti-HIV 1 test.

Anti-HCV is being evaluated currently in the North London and the Glasgow and West of Scotland RTCs. There are many aspects to clarify before routine testing can commence, although I think it would be prudent to include the cost of this test as

a development in your budgets for 1990/91. Currently I have been quoted £1.50 per test. Other aspects are the availability of confirmatory tests and the counselling and replacement of donors found positive. Preliminary results suggest that positives may be in the region of 0.5 to 1.0% although there may be regional variations.

I will keep you appraised of developments with these two tests.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

H.H. GUNSON,
National Director

c.c. Professor J.D. Cash /