

TBL 5

Dr Nicholas, HP(M)1

From: ROGER SCOFIELD, CA-OPU
Date: 23 February 1995Copies: Dr Metters, NUR
Dr Rejman, HC(M)1
Mr Kelly, OPU2

HEPATITIS C

1. I attach (for Dr Nicholas only) a letter from Sheila Adam RDPH at North Thames seeking advice on a letter from **GRO-A** of the Hepatitis C Support Group. Dr Metters has drafted a reply and is seeking comments.

2. This would seem to me to be an issue about Hepatitis C generically rather than anything about the lookback exercise. Although the reply seems perfectly alright to me, I thought it was appropriate to refer it to you, since you have the wider interest in Hepatitis C.

3. Two points arise. The first is the status of the Support Group. We have said that we would be happy as part of our response to the inadvertent infection of patients through blood transfusion, to give support to appropriate self-help groups where this was reckoned to be good value for money. I am not familiar with this particular group and would like to know something about them. Do you have any information?

4. Related to the above is the fact that Support Groups can be helpful where they facilitate encouragement and reciprocal help amongst their members. But they can also be a pain when they start promoting unconventional cures. I am not trying to write off all such procedures, but we have to be careful to whom we give any public approval lest it be seen that we give endorsement to everything that they are doing.

5. I put forward these points in addition to the more specific ones already included in Dr Metters' draft reply.

GRO-C

PP Roger Scofield
Room 303
Ext **GRO-C**
Eileen House