

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF THE NBTS

National Provision of Donors Committee

Minutes of the ninth meeting of the above Committee held on  
10th October 1990.

Present: Dr. R.J. Moore (Chairman)  
Mr. S.C. Barrett  
Dr. D. Collins  
Dr. J.F. Harrison  
Dr. V. James  
Mrs. J.R. Parsons  
Mr. A.R. Smith

Observers: Mr. R. Forsythe  
Mrs. M. Thornton

In Attendance: Mr. P.J. Cosgrove

1. Apologies for absence - none:

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 1990 were  
approved as a correct record.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Budget devolution

A letter explaining what budget devolution means has  
been issued to most donors and members reported no  
significant reaction.

Following an exchange of letters with the Blood Donor  
Association, the National Director has agreed to meet  
with representatives of the Association on  
30th November 1990.

3.2 Communications strategy : implementation target update

Considerable progress has been made, all but two  
Regions (Northern and East Anglia) have supplied a  
timetable and proposals for the implementation of POD's  
communication strategy.

45 → Several Regions are already actively pursuing the  
recommendations.

A paper identifying those Regions which could soon be  
audited will be presented at the next meeting.

The Committee was pleased by the very encouraging and positive reaction. It was agreed that implementation of the communications strategy would be a standing item for this Committee.

### 3.3 Summer campaign

Following the ministerial launch of the Summer campaign, which secured considerable media attention, attendance levels in July and August were very good.

Peter Harris of Wordsmiths produced press releases which were taken up by local papers and by the Daily Mail. Copies of the press releases at Appendix 1.

*Agreed*  
It was suggested that the impact of the posters could have been higher if the logo and enrolment message had been more prominent. Also in some Regions some of the sites where the posters were displayed were unlikely to reach many potential donors.

Nevertheless, the purpose of the posters was to raise public consciousness of the BTS, and the high attendance rates were encouraging. Scotland also ran a campaign and had good attendances, but in Ireland, where no campaign was run, attendance figures were not good.

Once again the outstanding feature of the Teledata results was the number of potential donors reacting positively to Sky TV showing the NBTS advertisement. Dr. Moore had thanked Sky TV for their continuing support.

It was agreed that it was essential that members should investigate the conversion rate of Teledata callers to donors.

#### Action - Members

### 3.4 Blood supply : update

Though stocks and the numbers bled have fallen in the last few weeks there has been no major shortfall in the blood supply.

A comparison with 1989 reveals that stocks are 40% higher and the bleed rate is up by 3%. If this rate is maintained the NBTS will collect 63,000 more donations this year over last year.

### 3.5 Christmas cards

A schedule detailing the allocation of Christmas reminder cards was tabled. 250,000 cards will be produced. The total estimated cost is £69,900.

The design of the card is in hand and full details will be made available to DSMs/RDOs as soon as possible. Members agreed to urge DSMs/RDOs to respond promptly to the tight deadlines expected throughout this exercise.

### 3.6 The 'Archers'

Alan Smith reported he had written a thank you letter to the producer of the 'Archers' for using the blood collection story line for almost a month. The Committee commended Alan for his initiative and success in convincing the producer to highlight the BTS.

### 3.7 Brooke Bond sponsorship

Dr. Moore reported that he had not yet received a response from Brooke Bond regarding their proposed sponsorship of the NBTS.

## 4. Donor panel information on MIS

P / Donor panel information will be going live early in November 1990 and a workshop for DSMs/RDOs will be arranged for early 1991.

Meanwhile DSMs/RDOs can contact their Regional Management Information Co-ordinators for currently available information.

## 5. Budget update

A budget statement showing the current position of the Central Publicity Budget was tabled.

Members reviewed current projects and it was agreed that some projects involving recruitment should be considered for the next financial year.

Efforts to run a recruitment campaign in conjunction with the AA had foundered previously but it is possible that this project could be revitalised. Dr. Moore agreed to look into this.

Action - Dr. Moore

Another vehicle for reaching potential donors was through British Telecom, recruitment material could be delivered with 'phone bills. Jane Parsons agreed to pursue this.

Action - Mrs. Parsons

Members agreed to bring further ideas to the Committee at the next meeting.

Action - Members



A major project for the near future will be the production of a New Donor Pack and a pack for issuing to donors after their first donation.

6. Donor awards - differentiation between plasma and blood donation

The Committee discussed the present situation where blood donors and plasma donors received the same awards when they achieved 10-100 blood donations or 5-750 plasma donations.

It was the overwhelming view of the Committee that the present awards system should remain as it is.

Of greater concern was the question of an award for first time donors or whether donors should receive an award after three or four donations. These questions will be addressed in connection with the membership card feasibility study which it is hoped will commence in the near future.

7. Publicity material

The Committee reviewed the current stock of publicity material and considered proposed additions/deletions. It was agreed that there would be no reprints of the landscape version of the Heart Man; Press Cuttings; and Ketchup posters.

Additions will include new thank you and workplace posters reflecting the ethnic diversity of the population. It was also suggested that a young persons poster following a similar vein might be produced.

Concerning the Friends card, Dr. Moore reported that unfortunately the prototype produced by TBWA was not up to standard.

Members put forward the names of companies which specialised in graphic design and Dr. Moore agreed to arrange for these companies to be contacted.

Action - Dr. Moore

New literature will include leaflets for deferred donors; plasma donor recruitment; first time donors; major disasters; transplants; ABO groups; regular donor leaflets and an updated "11 good things from blood" leaflet.

8. Feasibility study of membership card

The feasibility study will consist of two distinct steps. Firstly, a survey of donors attitudes and reactions to the idea of a membership card, and secondly a technical study to establish what is available.

As the survey of donor's attitudes is a natural extension of the work done by RI, it was agreed that Dr. Moore would write a specification and enquire if RI would complete this part of the study.

**Action - Dr. Moore**

The technical study will include questions about how a membership card will fit in existing information systems; how the system would operate; what the likely costs would be. A specification for this part of the study will be written and companies will be invited to submit bids.

Members agreed to supply Dr. Moore with any relevant information.

**Action - Members**

**9. Family Health**

A company which specialises in distributing leaflets through GPs surgeries has recently approached the NBTS. The NBTS already does this through FPCs, free of charge and the Committee advised that the Company should be informed their services were not required.

**10. Donor satisfaction poll**

One of the measures proposed to help managers assess the attitudes of donors was a satisfaction rating established by polling a sample of donors.

For MIS purposes a single satisfaction rating would be generated but local managers could use all the information generated as an indicator of team public relations, organisational and environmental problems affecting donors.

It was agreed that the first step would be to determine the right questions to ask, how best to distribute the questionnaire and how to interpret the results. Mr. Barrett agreed to let Dr. Moore have details of a specialist in this field.

**11. Any other business**

**11.1 Direct marketing**

Over the past few years there have been considerable advances in the technology and techniques of direct marketing.

Although the NBTS knows the message it wants to give and can provide the arguments that will motivate people, the need is for the best vehicle to get our message across.

The Christmas card reminder is an indicator of the kind of technology now available. It was agreed that DSMS and RDOs should be asked at Divisional level to advise POD as to what expertise is available.

Of paramount importance is the cost benefit ratio. If by employing these new technologies we can raise responsiveness and increase the number of regular donors, it may be worth spending more on higher quality presentation and call-ups.

It was agreed that when a suitable company is found and cost estimates indicate that it is feasible, pilot studies should be carried out to discover whether there are any benefits to be gained.

#### 11.2 Lowering the age limit for donation

Mairi Thornton advised the Committee that the lowering of the age limit for donation to 17 years had been a complete success in Scotland.

Dr. Moore advised the Committee that the question of lowering the age limit in England and Wales would be considered at the next meeting of the National Management Committee on 25th October 1990.

#### 11.3 Donors past retirement age

Dr. Harrison informed POD that an agreement has been reached between North West and North East Thames RTCs on the criteria for accepting donors who are past retirement age.

The basic criteria is that would be donors must have given 4 donations in the five years before retirement, one of which should have been given within the last 12 months. All donors meeting these criteria are sent a letter encouraging them to give provided they can complete a small health questionnaire satisfactorily. Then, subject to positive responses and to normal health questions, such donors are allowed to continue donating until they are 70.

These arrangements provide a more positive encouragement to over 65 donors than current national policy. It was agreed that to avoid donors being treated differently in different parts of the country, the National policy should be discussed by the NMC with a view to its revision if agreed.

#### 11.4 West Midlands "talk it over campaign"

Dr. Collins advised POD that a campaign to recruit more organ donors, the "talk it over campaign", had begun in West Midlands. The campaign literature included a recommendation that one way in which people could help would be by becoming blood donors.



11.5 Exhibition panels

Members advised Dr. Moore that there was a continuing demand for exhibition panels. It was agreed that these should be updated and added to the publicity list.

11.6 Publicity material

The Eastern Division raised the problem for DSMs and RDOs in ordering publicity material sight unseen. Dr. Moore said that mock-ups or proofs would generally be circulated but because of the tight deadlines involved in providing new material this might not always be possible.

12. Date of the next meeting

To be arranged.