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AIDS

Mr. Butterfill asked the Secretary of State for Social Services whether he will bring forward proposals immediately requiring all blood donors to sign a declaration that they are not in a high-risk group for acquired immune deficiency syndrome; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: We must ensure that all those in the AIDS high risk groups are made aware that they should not donate. Transfusion centres have been told to distribute copies of our revised leaflet "AIDS — Important New Advice for Blood Donors".

Requiring all donors to sign a declaration will not materially increase the safeguards. However transfusion directors are free to adopt this procedure if they wish.

Mr. Butterfill asked the Secretary of State for Social Services how many people have been monitored for acquired immune deficiency syndrome after acquiring HT LV-III from infected blood in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: In 1984 monitoring was commenced of the 3 recipients of blood transfusions given by a donor who subsequently had developed AIDS; the transfusions took place in 1983(2) and 1984(1).

This same donor provided plasma from which Factor VIII was manufactured and given in 1984 to 38 haemophiliacs; the HTLV III antibody status of these patients is being investigated.

Mrs. Renée Short asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he is satisfied that district and regional health authorities possess adequate resources to enable hospitals to adhere fully to the guidelines issued by his Department on acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: Yes. We are distributing nearly £500 million additional cash to regional health authorities in 1985-86. In addition we are expecting health authorities to produce cost improvement programmes yielding in excess of the £100 million identified this year.