

Mr Collier ✓

HEPATITIS B VACCINE

Mrs Firth  
If we are to  
"discourage use" we  
must surely tell the  
buyers + not the sellers!

I have now seen the exchange of minutes between your Division and Miss Stuart on follow-up to Ministers' decisions on the purchase of Hepatitis B Vaccine from Merck, Sharp and Dohme.

GRO-C

17/6

2. Whilst I take your point that this is no longer a purchasing issue - and CH are quite happy to prepare the draft reply for Ministers to send - it does seem to me that Ministers wishes cannot be fully conveyed in a letter of this kind. We need something else - a meeting or an informal word, if we are to adopt the 'friendly' way to convey the message MS(H) has asked to be conveyed, and thereafter, to find out what action the company propose to take with respect to marketing in this country.

3. DSB has the contacts and expertise in dealing with the manufacturer and I would have thought that Mr Taylor and Mr Rose were well placed to help here. Lest there be any doubt, I should make it clear that CH quite expect to be involved and I am sure Med MCD would be equally willing, and to participate in any meeting which your people could set up.

4. On the other hand, perhaps a quiet word between those who have already had contact on the subject might be a better way of achieving the informality Minister clearly intended. Perhaps we could have an urgent word about how this can best be handled? We clearly need to resolve this before we put the PO(H) folder back to Minsiter since the content of the draft we submit must depend on whether or not it is the only vehicle for conveying the outcome to the manufacturer.

GRO-C

17 June 1982

Mrs J M Firth  
CH

cc Mr Nodder  
Miss Stuart  
Dr Steadman

Miss Stuart  
Mr Collier will ring the company after the letter has gone. Could you pl put a draft through him, with some background.

GRO-C

18/6