

THE ROYAL INFIRMARY OF EDINBURGH

HAEMATOLOGY DEPARTMENT

GRO-C

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Your Ref.:
Our Ref.: MJ/PMS

1st October, 1987

Dr. C.A. Ludlam
Haemophilia Centre Director,
RIE

Dear Dr. Ludlam,

A few weeks ago, I wrote to Miss Taylor, Nursing Officer, giving her more information regarding the nursing duties of the Haemophilia Centre and particularly highlighting the extra work that has been possible because of the allocation of two nurses in the centre rather than one. Unfortunately I do not have a copy of that letter, but I would like to inform you of the points I made.

In the last year there has been a noticeable increase in individual visits to the centre. The amount of time each patient spends in the centre has increased too and we feel this is not directly related to treatment, but rather the individuals desire to talk to staff about their problems and worries particularly relating to HIV infection. Staff Nurse Reynolds and myself have tried to foster a friendly and somewhat informal atmosphere for our patients and have found that this has been appreciated. Our patients know that if they have a problem there will always be a nurse to talk to. We regard this "informal counselling" as essential for our patients and is only possible to do if there are two nurses in the centre. If time is to be spent talking to patients, one nurse must be free to continue the day to day treatments.

Since the beginning of the year, one nurse has always been in the centre on a Saturday morning, allowing patients who work during the week, the opportunity to attend the centre at a time convenient to themselves and still see a member of the haemophilia team. This would be impossible to continue if there was only one nurse in the centre.

Home visiting has become an important part of our work. Medical staff know they can ask us to visit patients if they are concerned about their health and patients too can request a visit. These visits are complimentary to the work of the social worker.

Bereavement visiting has been an important aspect of our work, emphasizing that we care for families and not just individuals.

Recently we have been encouraging wives of haemophiliacs who are concerned about HIV infection to talk to us and hopefully will be starting a wives group in the near future. This would be held in the evening or at the weekend and again would be impossible to do without two nurses.

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Finally having two nurses in the centre has provided patients with a flexible service. We have arranged that one nurse always remains in the centre until the last patient has left thus ensuring high levels of care at all times. As there are two of us we can then arrange to take time back when it is convenient.

It should also be noted that when our patients are hospitalised we work with Sister MacSween and her staff in looking after them.

We feel that two nurses are essential to run an efficient, caring service and maintain the high standards our patients deserve.

Yours sincerely,