

Michael Adam
SOL C5

From: A Harvey PH6.1
28 February 2001
cc M O'Mahony
C Lister
P Edwards
A Leigh
M Hall

Disclosure of Information relating to Blood Donation by vCJD Patients

1. At the last CMO/SEAC Epidemiology sub-group meeting the issue of whether the names of all current cases of vCJD in the country could be notified to all the regional blood transfusion services was discussed. The object is to enable all the UK Blood Transfusion Services to search their donor databases to establish whether or not any vCJD cases have ever been donors, and if so, to trace the whereabouts of their donations.
2. The Blood Transfusion Services have lent their support to this particular enquiry (a copy of their Medical Director's letter is enclosed). They have given assurances that as with all donor confidentiality matters, all concerned can be confident that the trust and confidence that is a vital part of the Service will be maintained.
3. I need to establish the legal standing of whether the perceived wider public interest that would be served by successfully pursuing this enquiry would override the rights to confidentiality of the few individuals concerned. This is in the light of the guarantees that underpin the work of the Transfusion Services as described in 2.
4. I would be grateful for a legal opinion on this question. This will be an item for discussion at the next meeting of the CMO/SEAC Epidemiology sub-group on Monday 12 March 2001. It would be extremely helpful if this legal opinion was available at that meeting.

GRO-C

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