

**MEDICAL RESTRICTED**

From: J T Brown  
HD – Public Health Division  
11 June 2004

Minister for Health and Community Care

**DEATH IN GLASGOW: vCJD IMPLICATIONS**

**Purpose**

1. This restricted note is by way of advance notice of a significant finding from a post-mortem conducted on a patient from Glasgow.
2. The patient received a blood transfusion (one unit) in April 1999 from blood which was later discovered to have come from a donor who subsequently developed vCJD. Though the Glasgow patient died of unrelated causes, the significance of the post-mortem findings is that prion protein has been found in spleen tissue, thus signalling the presence of vCJD. Taken with the probable transfusion-associated case last December which prompted the introduction of a range of preventive measures, this adds to the weight of evidence for person to person transmission through blood.
3. A report of the post-mortem findings has now been submitted by Professor Ironside, Director of the CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh to the Procurator Fiscal in Glasgow. He is considering what further action needs to be taken, including the possibility of an FAI. In reaching a conclusion, the Fiscal will need to take into account the views of the family. He proposes to discuss the findings with the family, we understand, next week, but we await confirmation of this from him.
4. Extensive publicity seems inevitable in the light of this development, and we are urgently considering with DH common lines to take. It is expected that an exercise to inform haemophiliacs and other recipients of plasma products of the potential risks associated with the same donors will shortly commence. This, too, will serve to increase publicity.
5. One other patient in Scotland received a transfusion from the same donor in 2000. That patient is still alive, but was informed earlier of their exposure to this blood and the possibility of contamination. But this finding will serve also to heighten that patient's fears (and other recipients of blood from similar donors.)
6. There will be a need for sensitive handling of this issue, and we shall come back to Ministers at the beginning of the week. Meantime this is for information only and not for disclosure.

**GRO-C**

**J T BROWN**

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11 June 2004

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*SH approved  
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Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
First Minister					X
Deputy First Minister					X
Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care					X

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