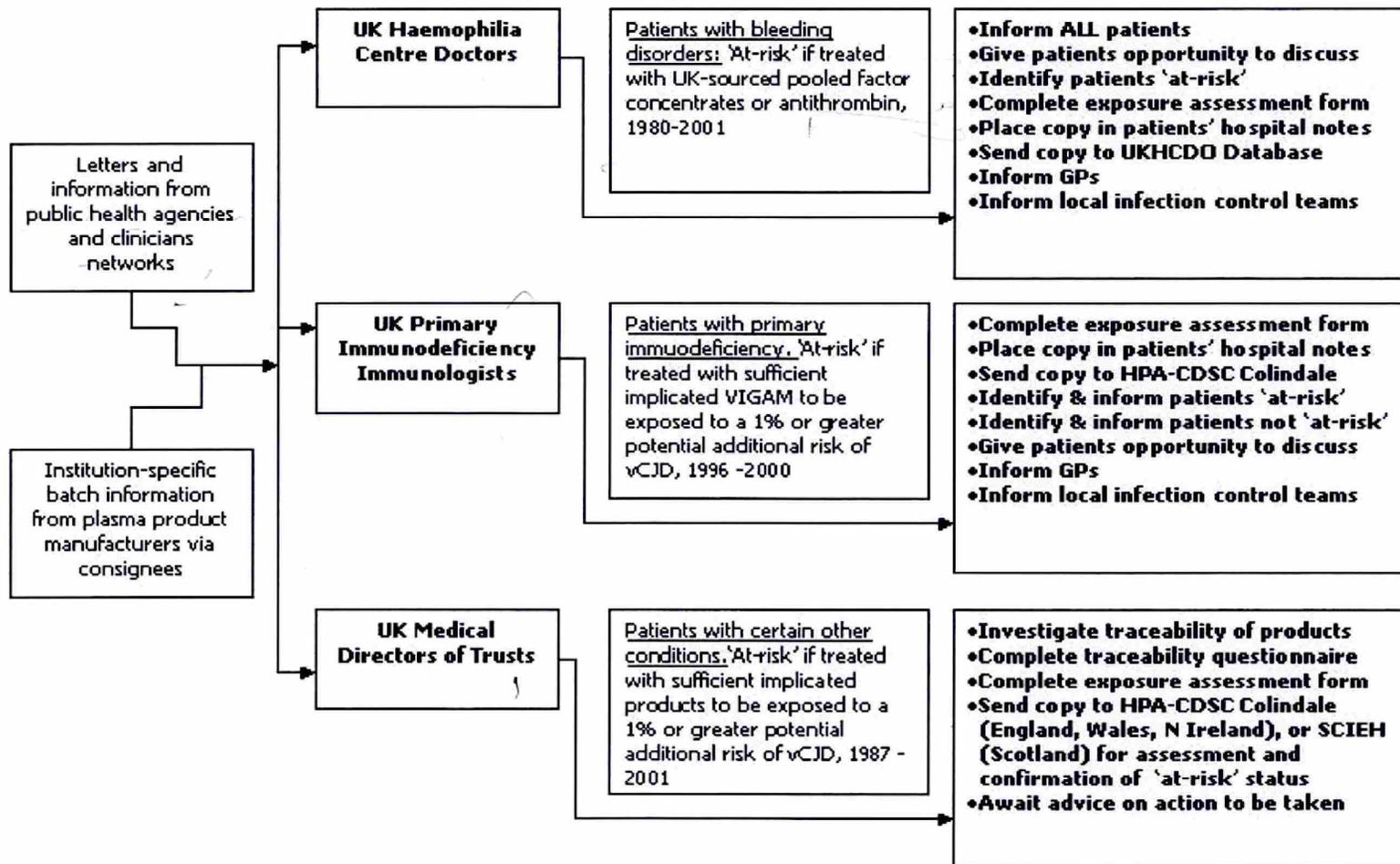


7th SEPTEMBER 2004
**vCJD AND PLASMA PRODUCTS:
 SUMMARY OF PATIENT NOTIFICATION EXERCISE***



* The Health Protection Agency's Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (Colindale) is handling this notification in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health is handling this notification in Scotland.

**PATIENT NOTIFICATION EXERCISE
MEDIA HANDLING PROTOCOL**

The Department of Health and the Health Protection Agency, working with patient groups, are doing everything possible to ensure that the patients involved in this notification exercise are contacted first by their clinicians, rather than hearing about it through the media. This is to ensure they receive accurate, relevant information and have access to appropriate support.

We plan to make a formal public announcement about the exercise shortly after patients are notified. However, before that time, it is clear that as more health professionals become aware of this exercise, the chances of the media becoming aware of it increase.

In order to minimise the likelihood of media coverage ahead of the planned announcement, we ask all those involved in the exercise to follow these guidelines:

- Keep the number of people who know about this exercise in advance to the minimum necessary. Please keep email copy lists as short as possible.
- If approached by the media seeking information about the exercise, **please refer journalists without further comment to the national Department of Health press office (contact details below).**
- This applies to all journalists, from the national, local or specialist media, regardless of how much information they appear to already have about the exercise.

This will minimise the chance of unplanned media coverage of this exercise and thus maximise the chances of patients receiving this information first from their clinicians. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Department of Health press office (also known as media centre)

During office hours contact:

Michael Clarke GRO-C
Alison Langley

The DH duty press officer can be contacted at any time outside office hours on:

GRO-C

or contact Michael Clarke on GRO-C or pager GRO-C

Ends.