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**Statement in response to fears blood transfusions can spread vCJD**

September 15, 2000

Karin Pappenheim, chief executive of the Haemophilia Society, said:

"The research, which has been published in The Lancet, is more evidence of the theoretical risk of transmission of new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease through blood transfusions.

"It further justifies the Government's decision two years ago to supply all children with haemophilia with genetically engineered clotting products for their treatment.

"As these recombinant clotting factors are not produced from human blood they contain minimal risk of transmitting blood borne viruses and other infectious agents such as variant CJD."

"Although there is no evidence that either classical CJD or new variant CJD has ever been transmitted to people with haemophilia through blood products, this new research shows that we cannot be certain that there is no risk of infectivity in these products.

"And this research throws more weight to the argument that recombinant clotting factors need to be made available to all people with haemophilia whatever their age and wherever they live in the UK.

"Those living in Ireland, Scotland and Wales do have access to recombinant treatment, but in England this is still restricted largely to the under 16s.

"This is an inequitable and unacceptable situation and the Haemophilia Society is campaigning to ensure equal access to recombinant for all. We will be calling on the Government to review the current inequitable situation and to extend provision of recombinant to adults as well as children."

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P.T.O.