

cc: LW
PG
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Dear Mr Gorham

Alternatives to UK Fresh Frozen Plasma

The provision of alternatives to fresh frozen plasma of UK origin (UK FFP) was discussed at the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood and Tissues for Transplantation 18 April.

The Committee considered two papers, a risk assessment from the Department's Economics and Operational Research unit on the risks of vCJD transmission by the continued use of UK FFP and the other from the National Blood Services on the logistics and costs of alternative provision. Members had seen the RA at the January meeting of MSBT, and had advised that alternative treatments to UK FFP should be explored by the NBS. They also agreed to attend an ad hoc meeting on the 18th of April to review the advice in the light of the NBS work.

Following discussion of these papers MSBT advised that alternatives to UK FFP could now be found and that this could reduce further the theoretical risk of vCJD transmission through transfusion. Specifically the Committee agreed that if it proved operationally safe and possible that pooled SD FFP be provided for adults and single unit MB FFP for neonates and cryoprecipitate production. MSBT however advised that this approach, **if agreed by Ministers**, should be strongly supported by the introduction of strong central guidance on better use of blood.

As Chair of MSBT I am therefore writing to you, to ask the NBS to work directly with the appropriate organisations to a) obtain more detailed information on the options and b) prepare a full implementation strategy. Specifically I am asking that you explore with intent the feasibility, logistics, and **detailed cost implications of implementing the MSBT advice, if Ministers decide that this is the way forward**. I would be grateful if you would indicate to me the timeframe for this work so that we, and colleagues in the other UK Health Departments can prepare detailed advice for Ministers.

A copy of this letter goes to Dr Angela Robinson, Medical Director.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

DR PAT TROOP
Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Chair, MSBT

