

National Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Surveillance Unit

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GRO-C

21st March 1995

Dr F.A. Ala,
National Blood Transfusion Service,
Regional Blood Transfusion Centre,
Vincent Drive,
Edgbaston,
Birmingham. B15 2SG

Dear Dr Ala,

Re: CJD and Transfusion

Many thanks for your letter regarding the issue of CJD and blood transfusion. I quite agree that it would be reasonable to proceed to the first stage you mention in your letter and the question really is how to do this most efficiently. We have over 550 cases with definite or probable CJD on our database and it would be extremely time consuming I think to try and review all these names with directors of transfusion services. As you may know, in many of the cases we have had the opportunity to interview the relatives to determine whether or not individuals acted as blood donors. We view this information as relatively accurate and perhaps the easiest thing for me to do would be to provide you with a list of names, addresses and dates of birth of these individuals together with the time at which time blood donation is said to have taken place. We also have a residential history and it would be possible to provide either an address or a relative location of these individuals at the time blood was donated.

If by this approach we can confirm that some individuals did indeed act as blood donors the question is whether recipients could be traced. If so, one approach would simply be to review our database which extends back to 1970 in England and Wales to see whether any of the names of these individuals have subsequently died of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. If individuals have died it might also be possible to obtain death certificates from OPCS.

In order to try and expedite matters I will arrange to compile a list of all individuals who are said to have acted as blood donors together with the other information I mention above.

I look forward to hearing from you as to whether you feel this approach is satisfactory.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

Dr R.G. Will
Consultant Neurologist