

WITNESS NAME: Professor John Cash

PENROSE INQUIRY – TOPIC C1 – Unsuitable donors

SNBTS Blood Shortages 1980-97

The provision of sufficient blood and blood components within each region of Scotland throughout this period was the responsibility of the local regional blood transfusion centre (RTC) team. As I recall, up until the early 1990s, the concept of regional self sufficiency was part of the strong independent/regional culture within the SNBTS.

This culture had existed since the creation of the SNBTS in 1939, and was not modified when the SNBTS became incorporated into the NHS in 1974 or when the first NMD was appointed. Some (including myself) believed that this fierce regional self sufficiency contributed much to the development of national self sufficiency in plasma products in Scotland and I must confess I was at some pains not to promote change unless really necessary.

But change began in the late 1980s, partly as a consequence of the nature of PFC's contributions but perhaps most important of all was the movement of surplus red cells from SNBTS to NBTS. This latter development revealed that there were rare occasions when as one SNBTS region was short of blood others were shipping their surpluses to England – wholly unaware of their SNBTS neighbour's needs!

As I recall, in the late 1980s we established an IT system in which information on RTC blood stocks throughout Scotland was available each day and centres were encouraged to use these data to obtain support from other regions when necessary.

My recollections of significant blood shortages are that they were rare, that they only occurred in the West and that on file are communications between myself and Drs Mitchell and Crawford (WBTS) on this topic. In addition there are innumerable documents on file which provide an insight into the programme for the movement of red cells from Scotland to England. I have always believed that there were never significant blood/blood component

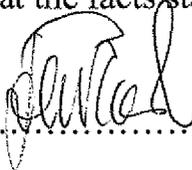
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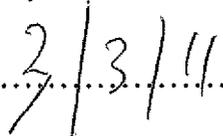
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shortages in Scotland during this period. The key problems were fierce local pride and communication glitches. As anticipated when understood change occurred.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..........