COMMERCIAL - IN CONFIDENCE

GENETICALLY MANIPULATED FACTOR VIII

I met the doctor mentioned in the Guardian article about genetically manufactured Factor VIII, on a visit to the Royal Free Haematology Unit yesterday.

There will be a paper in this week's Nature about the successful production of Factor VIII from a cell culture. at the Royal Free has been able to isolate a pure form of Factor VIII from plasma using a monoclonal antibody technique. Speywood Laboratories have been involved in the isolation of the protein and Genentech have been responsible for the DNA sequence translating it to mRNA which has been inserted in cells (origin unknown).

is confident that scaling up will not be a problem. He predicts that large-scale production could be possible in 3½ years. "Large-scale" in this context meaning 500 grams which would be a sufficient supply for a year for world demands. Equally important is that he predicts that gene probes to detect haemophilia in fetal material will be available within a year.

If this optimism is realised there are major implications for BPL and its development. is well aware of the position. He will keep in touch to ensure that we are kept informed of further developments. The work has been kept in strict confidence up till now because of the need to establish patents. told us that he had heard about the success of the work only a day before the press conference last week.

At the meeting in February of the Research Committee of the CBFA when genetically manufactured blood products were discussed, no members were aware of the imminence of this breakthrough.

MED SEB

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