TRANSMISSION OF ALZHEIMER-TYPE PLAQUES TO PRIMATES

1. CMO will wish to be aware that a meeting was held at DH yesterday, 4 January, to discuss the above findings. It was chaired by Professor Murray (Chairman of the MRC Co-ordinating Committee on Research in the Spongiform Encephalopathies in Man), and attended by relevant experts in the fields of Neurology, Neuropathology, molecular biology, amyloid biochemistry, and the spongiform encephalopathies, and by representatives of the MRC and AFRC.

2. Briefly, the meeting agreed that:

i) Dr Ridley et al's findings of experimental induction of $\beta$-amyloid in primates were valid, interesting and a significant advance in the understanding of neurodegenerative disorders;

ii) there were no immediate implications for the public health, and no further safeguards were thought to be necessary at present; and

iii) additional research was desirable, both epidemiological and at the molecular level. Possible avenues are being followed up by DH and the MRC, but the details will require further discussion.