

DOH7/4 0008

SB/142

17 DEC 92

B576-M

Ms Welham

From: Dr H Pickles RDD

Date: 16 December 1992

Copy: Dr Wight  
Mr P Lees (for files JR121/2646  
and JR121/2265)

CID, COLLINGE ET AL

I enclose a note which DRD may find helpful in advance of the lunch today at which he will be lobbied by a Collinge funder/supportor (Lord Peyton).

*P. Edwards*

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6. Trouble has been brewing for some time. Dr Collinge is lobbying hard, and threatening to go to the media, claiming Dr Will is blocking his research by denying him access to the material and case histories collected as part of the RDD-funded surveillance. Encouraged by us, the MRC is trying to arbitrate, and a meeting of the research funders is being called by the MRC for the 11th January. Our natural sympathies lie with Dr Will, who is a much easier character and one of our advisers on the Tyrrell committee on spongiform encephalopathies. On the other hand, we and the MRC do not want to hold up research.

7. Lord Peyton has been briefed to raise this at the lunch with DRD today.

8. The recommended line to take is:

- \* the HD priority is not to jeopardise the national surveillance of CJD
- \* research is very important, but a secondary issue, must be conducted according to the highest scientific and ethical standards
- \* a compromise solution should be sought, and a meeting under the auspices of the MRC is planned to effect this
- \* research, patients, their relatives and the national surveillance programme could all be damaged by comments to the press. This could also backfire on the researchers.

[9. Whilst this matter is not at the moment directly concerned with the iatrogenic CJD cases from hgH, there remains a possibility of litigation here, and this presents an added complication. There are also results to be made available shortly (1) concerning a farmer with CJD who had BSE animals, (2) on the possible transmissibility of Alzheimers and (3) a CMO letter on prevention of iatrogenic CJD transmission in neurosurgery, all of which will serve to increase media interest.]

92/12.16/5.3