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BLH/S Vol 1

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Minister for Health

Chairman
The Haemophilia Society
PO Box 9
16 Trinity Street
LONDON
SE1 1DE

2269

3 Oct October 1981

Dear

I was very pleased to have had an opportunity to discuss the supply of Factor VIII with you and your colleagues from the Haemophilia Society on 21 October.

I appreciate your Society's concern about the extent to which the NHS relies upon commercial blood products. As I told you, the upgrading programme being carried out at the Blood Products Laboratory at Elstree will, at present yields, enable the Laboratory to double its output of Factor VIII to 30 million international units by the end of 1982. While this will not eliminate the need for commercial products, it represents a major step forward in NHS production of this vital material.

I also said that we plan to replace the existing Blood Products Laboratory within the next few years. Planning and design work have not yet progressed far enough for the capacity of the new plant to be decided, and it will depend on a number of considerations such as the extent to which the NHS is able to build up the supply of plasma. Although I endorse the principle of self-sufficiency in blood products, it is only realistic to recognise that demand for Factor VIII is constantly increasing, and that self-sufficiency is not a goal we can achieve in the immediate future.

May I say in conclusion how impressed I am by the excellent work which your Society does to further understanding of the problems which haemophilia can cause. I think it would be very useful for us to meet again next year if you wish to review the supply of Factor VIII and other matters of interest to your members. I look forward to meeting you again.

Gerard Vaughan
DR GERARD VAUGHAN

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