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THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

NHS
MEL(1993)121National Health Service in Scotland
Management ExecutiveSt. Andrew's House
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Dear Colleague

**REPORT OF THE INQUIRY INTO CERVICAL
CYTOPATHOLOGY AT INVERCLYDE ROYAL
HOSPITAL, GREENOCK****Summary**

1. This letter encloses a copy of the Report of the Inquiry into Cervical Cytopathology at Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Greenock which was published today and indicates the action to be taken. A copy of the Press Notice issued by Lord Fraser is also attached for your information.

Action

2. The Minister has welcomed the Report and accepts the broad thrust of the conclusions and recommendations. Subject to some further detailed consultation on these, the Management Executive propose to issue further detailed guidance.

3. General Managers and Chief Executives are asked to draw the Report to the attention of Directors of Public Health Medicine/CAMOs, Unit General Managers and all clinicians and laboratory staff with responsibility for cervical screening. Please consider carefully the conclusions and recommendations in relation to your own arrangements and let me have any preliminary views which you may wish to offer at this time.

4. Further copies of the Report may be obtained from HMSO outlets and bookshops.

Background

5. Following the discovery that some 20,000 cervical smear test slides may have been misread in the Inverclyde Royal Hospital laboratory, Greenock during the period 1987 to February 1992 the Rt Hon the Lord Fraser of Carmyllie QC, Minister of State at the Scottish Office instructed an independent inquiry to be held.

6. The remit of the Inquiry Team chaired by Dr Euphemia McGoogan, was to inquire into the circumstances which led to the Review and to report to the Minister of State and make recommendations.

9 September 1993

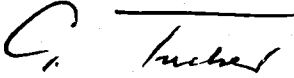
Addressees**For Action**General Managers,
Health BoardsChief Executives,
NHS Trusts**For information**Directors of Public
Health/CAMOsGeneral Manager,
Common Services AgencyGeneral Manager,
State HospitalGeneral Manager,
Health Education Board
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Unit General Managers

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7. The Minister has asked me on his behalf to convey his thanks to all Health Boards, Trusts and laboratory staff for the assistance which they gave the Argyll and Clyde Health Board to complete the re-screening exercise. This assistance was much appreciated and ensured that the re-screening exercise was completed as speedily as possible.

Yours sincerely



G W TUCKER



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9 September/1289/93

LORD FRASER WELCOMES THE REPORT OF THE INQUIRY
INTO CERVICAL SMEAR TESTS

The Rt Hon the Lord Fraser of Carmyllie QC, Minister of State at The Scottish Office today welcomed the Report of the Inquiry into Cervical Cytopathology at the Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Greenock published today. The Minister accepted the thrust of the recommendations, guaranteed the future of the Proficiency Testing Scheme and announced funding of £120,000 for a cervical screening central co-ordinating unit.

He also thanked Dr McGoogan and the members of the Inquiry Team for the completion of the Report within such a short timescale and for its comprehensive nature and the reassurance it will give to women throughout Scotland.

Lord Fraser said:

"I would like to thank Dr McGoogan and her Inquiry Team for completing this comprehensive Report so expeditiously. The exercise they have undertaken will I hope help reassure women in Scotland of the merits of making themselves available for cervical smear tests.

News Release



"I accept the thrust of the recommendations contained in the Report. I have asked my officials to arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the Argyll and Clyde Health Board to discuss the findings of the Report and to agree a programme of action. My officials will also consider urgently what guidance to issue to other Health Boards and Trusts to take forward the recommendations.

"I am please to announce that the funding will continue to guarantee the future of the Scottish Proficiency Testing Scheme which is an important element in maintaining standards. The Report recommends a cervical screening central co-ordinating structure for data monitoring and quality assurance attached to the Central Unit currently responsible for the Breast Screening Programme and I am please to announce today that this will be funded centrally at a cost of over £120,000.

"I welcome the fact that no woman has been reported to have invasive cancer following the rescreening exercise but I am concerned that some women remain untraced. I will be asking the Board to speed up the search for these women and to report back to me on progress on this by the end of this month.

"I have asked the Board to specifically check the previous smears of any women in the Argyll and Clyde area who have been diagnosed with cancer of the cervix since 1987 and are receiving treatment. I am delighted to announce that Dr McGoogan and Professor Day have agreed to validate and interpret the further information on these cases when the data is available from the Health Board."

NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS

1. The Inquiry into possible misread smear tests was ordered by the Rt Hon the Lord Fraser of Carmyllie on April 28, 1993. The Inquiry has been undertaken by Dr Euphemia McGoogan from the Department of Pathology at the University of Edinburgh assisted by Professor Nicholas Day, Professor of Public Health, Cambridge, Dr Elizabeth Hudson, Clinical Director at Northwick Park Hospital, Middlesex and a consultant cytopathologist and Ms Leeona Dorrian QC.

2. The remit of the Inquiry team was to enquire into the circumstances which led to the review of 20,000 cervical smear test results for the period 1987 to early 1992 undertaken at Inverclyde Royal Hospital Laboratory and to report to the Minister with recommendations.

3. Copies of the Report (ISBN No 0-11-495181-0, Price £7.50) are also available in Greenock from Bookpoint, 93 West Blackhall Street, Greenock, in Paisley from The University Bookshop and Royal Alexandra Hospital and from John Smith Booksellers, St Vincent Street, Glasgow.

Bob Major: 031 244 4976
September 9, 1993