



National Health Service in Scotland
Management Executive

St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

**ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT ON THE
SERVICE APPLICATION OF MOLECULAR
GENETIC TECHNOLOGY: A FRAMEWORK
FOR THE FUTURE**

25 November 1994

Summary

Addressees:

For action:

General Managers,
Health Boards

Chief Executives and
Chief Executives
Designate, NHS Trusts

For information:

Unit General Managers

General Manager,
Common Services Agency

General Manager, State
Hospital

General Manager,
Health Education Board
for Scotland

Enquiries to:

Mrs Cath Rodgers
National Advisory
Committees Secretariat
Room 205
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG
Tel: 031-244 2348
Fax: 031-244 2683

1. This letter draws the attention of Health Boards and Trusts to the attached Report, prepared by a Working Group of the National Advisory Committee for Scientific Services on The Service Application of Molecular Genetic Technology: A Framework For The Future.

Background

2. The Working Group was appointed by the Scottish Health Service Advisory Council in 1993 under the Chairmanship of Dr Elizabeth Boyd.

3. Molecular genetics may be defined as the branch of genetics that focuses on the structure, function, replication and mutation of molecules involved in the transmission of hereditary characteristics. The science of clinical molecular genetics is an extension of the basic biology of inheritance which recognises that many disorders, both rare and common, are of genetic origin and can be passed from one generation to the next.

4. Once an area of limited specialist interest, molecular genetics has now assumed a place of central importance in the aetiology of many of the common disorders of adult life. Advances in DNA technology have not only provided new and powerful tools for research into the molecular structure of the human genome, but have also created new possibilities for the diagnosis, prevention and management of genetic disorders, most of which have now been mapped with sufficient accuracy to allow prediction of inheritance within families.

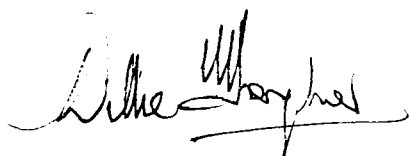
5. This report sets out to familiarise purchasers of laboratory services and Chief Executives of NHS Trusts with the vocabulary and purpose of the new technology so that patients may benefit from its application. It reviews the present use of DNA technology in hospital laboratories by describing the extent to which these applications are being utilised in the main laboratory disciplines and recommends that future developments be carefully progressed on a planned and co-ordinated basis in order to secure maximum use of limited resources.

6. Additional copies of the Report are available free of charge from Mrs C Rodgers, National Advisory Committees Secretariat, Room 205, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG, Tel: 031 244 2348.

Action

7. The Management Executive endorses the Report and Health Boards and Trusts are invited to decide what priority to give to these developments and the level of resources that they would wish to direct towards them.

Yours faithfully



W J FARQUHAR
National Advisory
Committees Secretariat