

1. Miss E M Jones
 2. Mr D Adams
 3. PS/Parliamentary Secretary
 4. PS/Secretary of State

AM
 cc PS/Permanent Secretary
 Mr J W Lloyd
 Mr R W Jarman
 Dr D J Hine
 Miss M P Bull
 Mr L Walford
 Mr D R Williams
 Mr G Podmore
 Dr E J Ludlow
 Mr H G Roberts

*Para 5 looks ok
 we've consulted if it
 is ok to sign it
 advisable for
 to clear it
 my proposal
 refers to
 BSE.
 CF*

CREUTZFELDT-JAKOB DISEASE (CJD)

Purpose

1. This submission advises of a report of a sixteen year old girl with possible CJD.

Background

2. Doctors at have recently advised the Department of a sixteen year old female patient in their care reported by the media as suffering from CJD. We understand that the patient, who is in a very poor state of health, has been in hospital for some four months. An article in yesterday's "Today" newspaper, doc 1, reported that the girl concerned has possibly become infected with CJD as a result of eating beefburgers. We understand that various tests have been undertaken on the patient and that the results of a brain biopsy are awaited. Pending the outcome of investigations it is not possible to confirm CJD.
3. Ministers will be aware from previous advice that CJD is one of a family of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, so called because of the spongy appearance of the brain under the microscope. The family of diseases includes bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle and scrapie in sheep.
4. Cases of CJD are monitored by the National CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh. Ministers will recall the results of the latest survey, details at doc 2, and the conclusions drawn that the increase in the incidence of CJD over the period April 1991 and April 1993 was not statistically significant and likely to be related to increased awareness of the disease.
5. This case may raise fears of a link between BSE and CJD. Current advice is that there is no scientific evidence of a link between BSE in cattle and CJD in humans. Furthermore advice from the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee is that they are satisfied that all necessary safeguards are in place to minimise further spread of spongiform encephalopathies in animals and to prevent any risk of transmission to humans.

6. The condition of the patient is being closely monitored.
Ministers will be kept informed of any significant developments.

Advice

7. Ministers are invited to note this case.

14 January 1994

H. G.
Mrs Helen George
PHF2

94/01.14/5.2