

From the Chief Medical Officer
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To Consultant Neurologists

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Your Ref:
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Dear Colleague

CJD REPORTING AND SURVEILLANCE

The system for the national surveillance for CJD has been functioning since May 1990 and has been a remarkable success thanks to the efforts of neurologists and others throughout the UK.

The systematic identification and investigation of all suspect cases continues to be of vital importance for public health as concerns remain about variant CJD, including the future size of the epidemic and the potential for secondary transmission, including through novel routes. You will be aware of the recently reported cases of vCJD following blood transfusion, and a new issue of concern is the identification of atypical cases of both scrapie and BSE in a number of countries in Europe and elsewhere.

Following advice from the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) I am writing to remind you to remain vigilant and to refer unusual neurological cases through the established national arrangements for referral and reporting of suspected cases of human prion disease (CJD).

All suspect cases should be referred simultaneously by fax to the National CJD Surveillance Unit (www.cjd.ed.ac.uk) at the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, and to the NHS National Prion Clinic (www.nationalprionclinic.org) at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London. The standard reporting form for this purpose is available from either unit's website. You may wish to discuss individual cases with the NCJDSU (Tel: 0131 537 2128; Fax: 0131 343 1404) or the NPC (Tel: 020 7405 2882; Fax: 020 7061 9899); the two units liaise on a regular basis concerning referrals.

