



Greater New York Hospital Association

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Kenneth E. Raske, President

January
Sixteen
2001

Paul Brown, M.D.
Chairperson of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Advisory Committee to the U. S.
Food and Drug Administration

Dear Dr. Brown:

The greater New York area is currently suffering from a serious blood shortage. Despite increased local blood collections and regular purchases from other U.S. blood centers, the shortage remains critical and has increased our reliance on other sources of blood supply, most notably from Europe. As things stand now, the increasing demand for blood in our area cannot always be met, and we anticipate the situation will only get worse. Further restrictions on our ability to import Euroblood at this time will create an even greater crisis.

We are, of course, committed to the availability of a *safe* blood supply for residents of the greater New York area, but we ask that you weigh carefully the necessity of imposing regulations that would restrict the supply of blood further, based on what some experts believe may be a theoretical risk only. We therefore urge the Advisory Committee to consider the full, broad-reaching consequences of restricting our ability to import blood from Europe, an action that would worsen an already critical shortage in the New York area.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of these issues.

My best.

Sincerely,

Kenneth E. Raske
President