

Irish Medical Times

[Home](#) » [News](#) » [Public Health](#) » DoH rejects call for vCJD group

[«Previous article](#) | [Next article»](#)

DoH rejects call for vCJD group

Dara Gantly

dara.gantly@imt.ie

The Department of Health (DoH) has rejected a call from the Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) to urgently re-establish an independent expert advisory group on variant Creutzfeldt Jakob disease (vCJD).

The request comes as the IBTS believes 'robust decision making on the part of the Minister' is required on funding two new technologies that could safeguard the blood supply from possible contamination.

An investigation by Irish Medical Times has revealed that Minister for Health Mary Harney was informed by the IBTS as far back as March that the issue of adopting prion filtration and prion testing would have to be dealt with 'at the highest level'.

However, the Department told IMT that a number of 'significant issues' need to be addressed before it can consider funding the new tests, which could cost up to €75 million over five years.

Speaking to IMT on the re-establishment of the expert group, IBTS CEO Andrew Kelly said: "There needs to be an objective group to look at information that we submit — another voice of advice to the Minister."

IBTS Medical and Scientific Director Dr Willie Murphy added that the filter has already been examined in safety studies involving 20 patients from Cork, and a further hundred units are being transfused at Cavan General Hospital. He hopes to extend this to Crumlin Hospital next month.

With the UK and France likely to move on the new technologies shortly, Dr Murphy warned that if Ireland was seen to lag on this issue, the pressure on the Government could become 'unbearable'.

Posted in [Public Health](#) on *21 August 2009*

Tags: [Department of Health](#), [IBTS](#)

Leave a comment

(If you haven't left a comment here before, you may need to be approved by the site owner before your comment will appear. Until then, it won't appear on the entry. Thanks for waiting.)

Name

Email address (Email address will not be shown)

URL

Remember personal info?

Comments