

Mr Malley believed that the Advisory Group should as far as possible uphold three principles:

- (i) the preservation of some similarity between the treatment of supra regional and other services under the NHS reforms;
- (ii) the avoidance of disruption to the provision of the services;
- (iii) the avoidance of proliferation of non-designated units offering supra regional services;

He strongly supported option 2 which dealt with all three issues.

4.4 Members considered the option of taking no action (ie retaining the present system) but noted that from 1991 there would have to be a contract between the Department and health authorities. Sir Anthony Grabham supported Mr Hunt's view that it might be best to wait and see how the rest of the NHS fared so that the supra regional services could benefit from the experiences of the other specialties. If this option was not open to the Group the interim solution seemed suitable. The Chairman and some other members, however, believed that a slow pace would not be acceptable to Ministers, and did not believe that the Group could put forward a suggestion for no change in the light of statements already issued by Ministers.

4.5 Sir Anthony Grabham reported that the JCC had debated the principles of agreements on service provision. It had concluded that in some cases it was right to rein in services, although in general they would not seek to restrict activity if there was local support for the provision of a service. Members of the Advisory Group appreciated the difficulties of the profession exercising control over service provision, but some favoured for stronger action to prevent proliferation.

Dr Halliday agreed to develop a paper for the next meeting in conjunction with Mr English and Sir Anthony Grabham.

ACTION: DR HALLIDAY