OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 99-559V Filed: May 15, 2003

ORDER

On May 13, 2003, this court conducted a telephonic status conference with representative counsel from petitioners' bar and the government on the discovery issues involving this and over 180 other Hepatitis B cases pending before this court. At the next status conference, to be held in approximately two (2) months:

- 1. The parties shall update the court on Mr. Maglio's and Mr. Matanoski's joint efforts to resolve the issues and details relating to the appointment of an outside and independent panel of experts. The court expects that over the next two months, these representative counsel will have discussed thoroughly these issues and details. The topics of discussion should include how these experts will be identified, the appropriate expertises, what the panel's tasks will be, and whether the cases will be approached according to the injury alleged, the medical theory of causation presented, or by some other method.
- 2. The government, with the assistance of Mr. Michael Barone from the FDA, shall update the court on the status of the Hepatitis B PLA reviews being conducted as part of the autism discovery proceedings. This update shall include the status of information submissions from the manufacturers and the FDA's responses thereto.
- 3. The parties shall contact the court, **by no later than July 18, 2003**, to schedule the next Hepatitis B Discovery status conference. The parties may contact Meredith A. Mills, at (202) 504-2329, to reserve a date for this conference call.

The court remains committed to resolving the Hepatitis B discovery issues in a cooperative, flexible, and timely fashion. With that goal in mind, the undersigned welcomes the opportunity to work with counsel informally, in an individual and mediator capacity, to further discuss and develop administrative options for resolving the difficult discovery and logistical issues. The parties may contact Meredith A. Mills, at (202) 504-2329, to schedule a conference call, request the court's assistance prior to the next status conference, or raise any questions regarding this Order or the discovery proceedings in the Hepatitis B cases.

IT IS SO ORDERED.	
	Gary J. Golkiewicz Chief Special Master