

**NHSBT Board Meeting**  
September 2018

**Transplant Sustainability and Resilience Summit**

**1. Status – Official**

**2. Executive Summary**

The numbers of organ donations and transplants have increased year on year and 2017/ 18 saw another record number of lives saved through organ transplantation. Changes in legislation around organ donation, combined with novel technologies in donor organ procurement and preservation, mean that the numbers of transplants in future years are likely to increase further. NHSBT and the British Transplantation Society (BTS) are keen to ensure that the UK transplant service is able to keep pace with these developments and to ensure that no opportunity for accepting a transplantable organ is missed.

**3. Action Requested**

**Note the outcomes of the Transplant Sustainability and Resilience Summit and endorse the proposed plans to take forward solutions to meet the challenges, including the development of Transplant Collaborative meetings.**

**4. Purpose of the paper**

- 4.1 To support this work a Transplant Sustainability and Resilience Summit was held in June 2018. The summit explored what the future challenges for transplantation might be and how as a community we can work together to identify solutions. This paper outlines the learning and proposals developed at the Summit and how this is intended to support improving organ transplantation in the UK.

**5. Background**

- 5.1 Over the past 10 years the number of deceased donors has increased significantly and a record number of patients have received transplants. Two areas in deceased donation that require focus are organ acceptance and organ utilisation. The UK strategy 'Taking Organ

Utilisation to 2020' sets out the improvements that could be made across the donation and transplantation pathway to ensure that as many organs as possible are safely transplanted.

- 5.2 Outcome 5 of the strategy states: Innovation and best practice is recognised, rewarded and shared. Barriers to maximising the potential for safe organ transplantation are quickly identified and addressed.
- 5.3 Actions to achieve Outcome 5 are detailed in the strategy and include: NHSBT to survey all Transplant Units to explore what, if anything, should be done to improve the infrastructure and resources to support organ utilisation.
- 5.4 In 2017 a survey was sent to all UK transplant units, this identified four main challenges to meeting the current and future demands:
- Out of hours provision.
  - Access to theatres and ICU.
  - Competing pressures on time and workload.
  - Staff recruitment and retention.
- 5.5 In June 2018, the Transplant and Sustainability Resilience Summit brought together over 150 people with a role in organ transplantation. The delegates included representatives from all transplant units in the UK, with national stakeholders such as NHS Blood and Transplant and UK Commissioners. Delegates explored the current and future challenges for transplantation and their causes. Practical solutions were identified and discussions held with a focus on maximising the use of existing resources.

## **6. Proposal**

- 6.1 During the Summit, the causes of the four main challenges to meeting the current and future demands in transplantation were discussed. Common issues noted across all four categories were:
- The unpredictable nature of transplantation.
  - IT infrastructure.
  - Infrastructure supporting Transplant centres.
  - Competing priorities in hospitals busy with other work, that may include aspects of care with performance indicators.
- 6.2 A number of suggestions were put forward about what could be done to meet these challenges, these included:
- Improved collaboration between units and services, working across teams and collaborating to ensure the best use of available resources.

- Increasing the numbers of people who want to work within the service, through providing workforce models and establishing minimum standards for staffing with clear career pathways.
- Changing the culture in transplantation – particularly regarding long working hours, which leads to burnout.
- Improved triage systems, both nationally and locally, to manage increase in offered organs.
- Improved relationship with NHS Boards.

## **7. Transplant Collaborative Meetings**

- 7.1 One initiative that gained support at the Summit was the concept of follow-on regional meetings (Transplant Collaborative Meetings). These meetings would take a format similar to that of the UK Summit with geographically close units having clear goals to promote joint working in order to address problems highlighted repeatedly by delegates. These included:
- Personal Burnout.
  - Unpredictability of workload.
  - Peaks of activity, lasting over days/weekends.
- 7.2 There was strong support for collaborative working to continue and develop between geographically close units.
- 7.3 This concept would require support from NHSBT, backing from Commissioners in charge of the units involved and strong professional engagement from the BTS.
- 7.4 In discussions after the Summit, it was pointed out that the London Kidney and Kidney/Pancreas units already meet regularly for clinician-led meetings and are therefore well placed to test this collaborative model further. Many of the leaders of the London units were present at the Summit.
- 7.5 It is noted that NHSBT was successful in submitting a short project proposal to NHS England for consideration of employees on their internal development programme to undertake a placement within another NHS organisation. Therefore, an NHS England employee will be working within the Organ Donation and Transplantation Directorate to devise, develop and pilot a Transplant Collaborative meeting within the London Kidney/ Pancreas units.
- 7.6 After this pilot meeting it is planned that similar regional meetings would be held, working closely with commissioners and covering different areas as well as different types of organ transplant.
- 7.7 In addition, the BTS will continue to work with transplant units, those involved in supporting services (e.g. nephrologists; physicians) and the relevant stakeholders, such as the UK Commissioners and Royal

Colleges. In collaboration it will consider what action could be taken forward by the BTS as the leading professional society, for example in Training and Education as well as Guidance documents.

- 7.8 NHSBT and the BTS will collectively identify the solutions that can be taken forward nationally, regionally and locally. Building a service that can continue to keep pace with increased activity whilst driving forward innovations and developments to ensure that no opportunity for transplantation is missed.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 That the Board note the contents of this report and endorse the proposed way forward.

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