



# *Blood and Transplant*

## **A Guide to Running a Transfusion Awareness Event**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This guidance has been produced to assist you in planning an event for raising transfusion awareness among staff, patients and the public. It is hoped this will provide you with some points to consider and tips and advice on how to run a successful event. The most important factor to remember is that any strategy for raising awareness needs careful planning, whether it is a one off event or a long running campaign.

Aim to do as much as you can with the resources you have – but ensure that it is done efficiently and with purpose. It is better to have an organised event with everything in its right place than to have loads of ‘stuff’ that doesn’t fit or serve its intended purpose. You may also want to consider putting on more than one event to achieve all of your objectives.

The guide will work through the key areas, step by step that need consideration in order to make your event a success.

## **STEP ONE**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

It is important at the beginning of planning an awareness event that you identify what the aims and objectives are as fully as possible. There are a number of questions that can help you to determine this:

- Why are you undertaking the event? – what is the motive/driver?
- What are the key issues that you wish to address? – consider both primary and secondary issues
- What are the risks and benefits of running such an event? – can you learn from evaluations/outcomes of previous events?
- What is it that you hope to achieve? – what is the current situation and what change do you want to happen (this relates back to the first point)?
- How will you measure the impact / success of the event? – what are your desired outcomes, what (if any) will be the legacy of the event?

Remember an aim is a general goal of what you want to achieve, the objectives are the actions you are going to complete to do this.

## **STEP TWO**

### **PLAN**

After establishing the aim(s) and objectives, you will need to formulate a plan of what needs to happen, and when, for the event to take place. It may be useful to have a simple checklist or time table considering:

- A time-frame over which to plan the event (3 months is a good guide).
- Match the type of event to the purpose that you want it to serve.
- Do you need the support from others i.e. The Trust, HTT/HTC, Patient Involvement group, outside organisations (Royal Colleges, Professional bodies, charities)?
- What needs to be done before the event can happen? By who? Where and when?
- Do you have a suitable location/facilities? Is there access to power points, table and chairs (for event holders and audience), AV equipment? Do these need advanced booking?
- Do you need any financial support? Will you be seeking sponsorship?
- Build time in the planning for advertising/publicising the event.

## STEP THREE

### WHAT IS THE MESSAGE AND WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

The message you want to convey is closely tied to the audience that you want to reach.

Your message needs to do three things:

- **Catch your audiences attention**
- **Alert them to the issue in a way that they can understand**
- **Provide them with the right balance of information about the issue**

Ensure that any messages you intend to deliver are clear, concise and in plain English with minimal jargon. Try testing content out on colleagues / friends with limited knowledge of the issue to see if it makes sense to them.

You could begin by:

1. Identify the particular issue that you want to concentrate on. An example may be the use of identification bands.
2. Then decide who are your target audience e.g. staff who are responsible for placing wristbands on patients; this could be in just one or two specific areas of the hospital and should preferably include patients and their relatives.
3. Look at why there is poor compliance with use of wristbands? What are the barriers that prevent good practice / a change in behaviour? Consider looking at the results of past audits on wristbands to identify issues.
4. What does your target audience know and what do you want them to know? A brief questionnaire prior to the event to assess baseline knowledge may be useful.
5. What is the best mode of communication to reach your audience? Would an informal visit from the Transfusion Practitioner at hand-over be the best option when targeting Nurses? Maybe a formal presentation to junior Doctors at a dedicated teaching session would be required? Could your event be part of a bigger public facing event? What about fairs for healthcare/medical students?
6. Will your core message be accompanied by supporting messages? For example if a patient does not have an ID band there is potential for a wrong transfusion to be given. Therefore, it is essential that the correct checking procedure is followed.
7. How is the core message relevant to the target audience? Are they directly involved in patient care? What may happen if the target audience does not comply with the message e.g. the patient may get the wrong blood. How can patients and relatives challenge poor practice, or get more involved in their care?
8. Highlight the best practice, guidelines, trust policy and regulatory requirements.
9. How does it impact on them? If an error occurs it could lead to patient harm, extra work, incident reports, disciplinary action, and personal or trust liability. Recount case studies if possible. What should a patient/relative complain about and how?

## STEP FOUR

### WHAT RESOURCES/TOOLS DO YOU NEED?

Once you have established what message(s) you want to convey and to which target audience, you need to use the necessary tools to catch your audience's attention and deliver that message. It is therefore important that the message goes through the most appropriate media and most appropriate route.

- Consider building a toolkit containing all educational resources that may be needed e.g. Factsheets, poster, stickers, leaflets, evaluations.
- Produce a poster on the topic to display in areas where the target audiences work, attend, or congregate.
- Get hold of clinical equipment and consumables related to the issues being highlighted to use at the event.
- Additional AV equipment may be required depending on the size of the audience; assess whether there are any special requirements relating to auditory or visual impairment.
- If you are addressing a contentious issue prepare to be challenged – have any source material you may be quoting/referencing to hand.
- Will your audience need tea & coffee or lunch providing?
- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation, or consider other more interactive ways – games with prizes, scenarios, role play.
- Consider also arranging for members of the Hospital Transfusion Team to visit specific clinical areas to perform a question and answer session; or a drop in educational session at a time that will be convenient for your audience.
- Seek assistance from the Hospitals Patient Advice and Liaison Service if required.
- Prepare/access self-directed learning material the audience can use after the event.
- Explore other educational resources to share e.g. e-learning sites.

Speak to your NHSBT Patient Blood Management Practitioner to discover what educational materials are already available and what support they can provide.

## STEP FIVE

### HOW WILL YOU ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT?

Getting the right publicity is a vital part of any awareness event as it increases how far you can spread your message. Ensure that the event is advertised early and reinforced right up until the event commences. Be consistent with your publicity; make sure that it has an identity and that the identity runs through all of the campaign materials. Familiarity drip fed via a number of means has more of an impact, as it acts as a constant reminder.

- Use available existing contacts to help spread the word.
- Network in the target areas to increase your profile.
- Use social media, screen savers for PC desk tops, electronic noticed boards or trust intranet.
- Display posters/flyers to advertise your event in areas populated by the target audience – bold and colourful are most eye-catching.
- If appropriate approach your local hospital radio to broadcast details of the event.
- Utilise all forms of communication to advertise i.e. personal invites, telephone calls, e-mails, newsletters, meetings, screensavers and social media.
- Have the events incorporated in to governance plans and put on the agenda of all relevant meetings.
- Encourage champions in clinical practice to promote the event/issue.
- Sell the benefits of the event to the target audience – what is in it for them if they attend?
- Please also consider registering your event on the RCPATH National Pathology year website at: <https://www.rcpath.org/discover-pathology/events-landing-page/national-pathology-week.html>

## STEP SIX

### WHAT TO DO ON THE DAY

- Arrive early to prepare for the event – make sure you can get access to the facilities at the time you will be wanting to set up.
- Arrange to pre-meet any others involved in the event and where necessary allocate roles and responsibilities.
- Organise cover of events stand over coffee and lunch breaks if needed.
- Gather the necessary resources for the day e.g. IT equipment, extra chairs.
- Display any relevant educational materials.
- Put up sign posts to the event.
- Have a stock of 'take-aways' (leaflets etc.) as appropriate and available; monitor the use/consumption of leaflets by the audience – see what works and what doesn't.
- Keep a record of attendance if appropriate. Obtain
- feedback from the day i.e. evaluation form.
- Give out contact details for post-event questions or follow up.

## STEP SEVEN

### EVALUATE THE EVENT

The feedback gained from each aspect of the project is crucial for any future events.

- Gauge the success of the event by reviewing evaluation forms, informal feedback and attendance numbers.
- Use questions asked by the audience / attendees to guide development of future events.
- Reflect on the day noting what went well / not so well.
- Write up your evaluation of the event and promote this – include in appropriate reports, produce a poster to celebrate your achievement.
- Feed back to staff who helped organise or run the event; consider also feedback to outside organisations e.g. NHSBT, Royal College of Pathologists.
- Store all of this information to assist with any future planning of events.
- Consider other ways to measure impact of the event, such as an audit or survey.



**And Finally....  
Celebrate your success,  
thank everyone that supported the event  
and monitor / review changes in practice.**