

**Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of NHS Blood and Transplant held at
2.00pm on Thursday 1st March 2007 at the National Blood Service
65 New Street, Birmingham B2 4DU**

Present:	Mr E Fullagar	Dr A Robinson
	Mrs E Buggins	Dr C Ronaldson
	Mr J Forsythe	Mr C Rudge
	Mr P Garwood	Mr B Savery
	Mr M Gorham	Dr D Walford
	Mr D Greggains	
	Mrs J Gubbins	
	Mr G Jenkins	

In attendance:	Mr D Dryburgh	Mr T Male
	Mr D Evans	Mr A McDermott
	Mr C Hartley	Ms J Minifie

07/15 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies had been received from Mrs Reynolds and Mr Connon. Mrs Gubbins had been delayed.

Mr Gorham said that he had already informed Members who had been on the NBA Board that Mike Fogden's wife had died earlier in the week following a long illness. Mr Fullagar agreed to write to Mr Fogden on behalf of the Board.

07/16 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed subject to one change. This was to 07/03.3, **Coroner's Verdict on Newcastle Patient Incident**, where an additional sentence was to be inserted after the first sentence. This sentence to read "This was not absolutely clear however because the Coroner's report did not distinguish between the Newcastle Trust and the NBS Centre in Newcastle."

07/17 MATTERS ARISING

17.1 Tissue Services – Skin

Mr Garwood said that an event had now been confirmed for 23rd/24th April. He said he would circulate a note with the details.

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17.2 Performance Report

A paragraph on the use of agency staff where it was not intended to fill posts in the NBS, had been included in this month's performance report.

Mr Rudge said he would respond to Dr Robinson's query about road traffic accidents.

CRu

07/18 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Dr Ronaldson presented the report for BPL. He said that the inventory for albumin remained tight although he did not expect further back orders. Unfortunately a lost time accident had recently occurred, ending BPL's excellent record which had stood at 1.5 million hours. ADRs remained under control. BPL had experienced a record sales month, and its best ever two month period for sales. As indicated at the previous meeting, redundancies and phasing of plasma fractionation had produced a

loss for the month of January but Dr Ronaldson continued to predict a financial surplus at the year end. The HR indicators had now been adjusted to reflect the restructuring and staff turnover in the R & D department continued to be monitored.

A typing error was noted on pages 3 and 9 where the financial deficit figure for BPL should read £772,000.

Mr Garwood presented the report for the NBS. He said that supply and demand for platelets had been satisfactory. Red cell stocks had been exceptionally challenging but were now above the minimum target level although a slight drop was expected. The hard work put into increasing skin stocks was showing results. Stock now stood at 66,000 sq cms, with the highest ever amount, 41,000 sq cms, having been banked during January. Quality and Safety were satisfactory and reporting arrangements for lost time accidents, and for HR items were being revised. An increase in sickness absence rates was a matter for concern and work was in hand to see whether any underlying causes could be identified. In answer to a question, Mr Garwood said he received information on numbers of temporary staff and would include information from the beginning of the new financial year, possibly including an additional line in the graph. It was noted that the pattern of staff turnover did not match the pattern of sickness absence.

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Mr Rudge presented the report for UKT. This was largely unchanged from the report for the previous month. He drew attention to the 11% increase in solid organ transplants overall compared with the same nine months in 2005/06. This had occurred for a variety of reasons, some of which related to NHSBT.

Mr Jenkins said he believed that Agenda for Change (AfC) was the underlying issue behind staff turnover. He was also concerned that it could lead to the loss of key staff such as those involved in the Filton project. There was a discussion around the fact that AfC was now a significant issue across many staffing areas in the NHS where salaries no longer met market rates. Mr Evans said a set of criteria for the application of recruitment and retention premia was being developed. He was however concerned to ensure that those were controlled and used appropriately where turnover increases and difficulties in recruiting could be demonstrated. Mr Jenkins urged that this work be completed quickly.

07/19 **FINANCE REPORT**

Mr Savery presented the report. He said that, with two months of the financial year remaining, NHSBT's financial position was satisfactory. He drew attention to the change in BPL's forecast resulting from the NAO's change to accounting procedures at the year end. This concerned revaluation of BPL's stock at the year end dollar exchange rate rather than an average of the rates throughout the year. This was a technical accounting issue however and would not affect the cash position. He said he anticipated that overall NHSBT would end the year with a small surplus.

Mr Savery said he was monitoring carefully the position on debtors and said that neither UCLH or Barts were disputing their outstanding debts. While, in the interests of NHSBT's year end cash position, he would not be actively chasing payments over the next month, he would do so again after 1st April when, in liaison with William Connon at the DH, he would use the formal monitoring procedure for Foundation Trusts to register NHSBT's complaints. He said that the NAO had confirmed that there was not a need for a provision in the accounts in respect of these debts.

Mr Jenkins asked for reassurance that capital expenditure in the remainder of the financial year would represent value for money. Mr Gorham said he was unaware of any expenditure to be made other than on planned items but said he was happy to provide that reassurance.

MG

Mr Savery raised an additional item which was not covered by his report. The Bank of England was withdrawing its facility for dollar accounts. BPL held a dollar account with the Bank of England and there was no alternative provider of this facility in the public sector. BPL therefore proposed opening a dollar account with Lloyds. The Board approved this. Mr Savery said DH approval would also be needed as the Lloyds account was non-PGO.

07/20 **REPORTS FROM THE MAIN COMMITTEES**

20.1 **Minutes of the Meeting of the GAC on 15.1.07**

Mr Jenkins had reported verbally at the previous meeting. The minutes were noted.

20.2 **Update from the NRRC Meeting on 26.2.07**

Dr Walford said a good meeting had been held on 26th February. The Board was pleased to learn that the Committee had considered, and awarded grants for, two project applications from UKT. One of these related to the potential impact of additional donor co-ordinators on relative refusal rates; the other was a three-year studentship under the supervision of Dave Collett with the potential for a PhD at Southampton University. All the NBS projects which met the necessary criteria had also been supported but Dr Walford drew attention to the fact that the UKT projects were being funded via blood prices and the need for the Board to address the issue of funding for UKT R & D. Mr Gorham said that Professor Sally Davies had made some helpful suggestions for attracting funding to the organ transplant field.

07/21 **BOARD PROGRAMME FOR 2007/08**

Dr Walford suggested that it might be premature to hold a workshop discussion on NHSBT's research before the new Medical Director and the R & D lead had taken up post. Mr Gorham said that from discussions with the DH, and discussions at the recent NRRC, he understood that the DH were content with NHSBT's interim position on R & D and therefore he was content to defer this workshop item until the Autumn. Dr Walford said she would be having further discussions with the DH R & D department to establish how NHSBT would fit into the new Institute of Research. It was suggested and agreed that it would be helpful to focus on Stem Cells and related issues at the May workshop.

It was agreed that workshop time should not be filled by non-essential items but it was also agreed that the time should be held available in order, for instance, for NEDs to have the opportunity to contribute at an early stage on issues emanating from the NBS redevelopment programme. If workshop time was not required on any date, a single meeting stretching over the middle of the day would be preferable for those travelling longer distances.

Subject to the points above, the programme was noted. Mrs Gubbins joined the meeting.

07/22 **UPDATE ON COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF BLOOD TRANSFUSION AND ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION**

Dr Robinson presented the update and this was noted. Mr Gorham said he expected Dr Robinson's successor in NHSBT to take up a similar role and said he would probably ask Dr Lorna Williamson to cover this function in the meantime.

07/23 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

07/24 **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, London NW1 on Thursday 5th April.

07/25 **RESOLUTION ON CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

The resolution was approved.