

NHS BLOOD AND TRANSPLANT
CARDIOTHORACIC ADVISORY GROUP - HEART
PROPOSAL FOR A REVISED HEART FAST TRACK SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

- 1 The current heart fast track offering scheme is initiated in two scenarios:
- When a heart is available at short notice from a UK donor, i.e.:
 - Aortic cross-clamp is expected within 90 minutes of the referral to NHSBT, or
 - The heart has already been removed or is in the process of removal, and
 - All UK centres have not already had an opportunity to decline the heart
 - A heart is available from Europe

CURRENT ALLOCATION SCHEME

- 2 Currently, hearts are offered by the ODT Duty Office to named patients or as centre choice offers via the Heart Matching Run. Each centre gets 45 minutes to accept/decline a firm heart offer on behalf of their patient/centre and 30 minutes for a previously provisional offer that is then changed to a firm offer. The ODT Duty Office make multiple offers to each individual centre until the heart is placed or until the fast track scheme criteria listed above are met and the scheme is initiated. Each centre then has 45 minutes to decide about the offer.
- 3 **Table 1** shows the number of offers of a DBD donor hearts before offering stops where the heart was used for transplantation or declined/accepted not used for donor or organ related reasons. These offers are presented separately for offers of hearts regardless of outcome and offers of hearts that were accepted and subsequently used for transplantation. In over 90% of cases heart offering stopped by the 5th offer. In cases where the heart was accepted and ultimately used for transplantation, 94% were accepted by the 2nd offer.

Table 1 **Number of offers¹ of a DBD donor heart,
1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019**

| Number of offers ¹ | All hearts offered | | Hearts offered, accepted and transplanted | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| | % offering stopped | Cumulative percent | % accepted | Cumulative percent |
| 1 | 54 | 54 | 85 | 85 |
| 2 | 15 | 69 | 9 | 94 |
| 3 | 13 | 82 | 3 | 97 |
| 4 | 6 | 88 | 2 | 99 |
| 5 | 5 | 93 | 1 | 100 |
| 6 | 3 | 96 | 0 | 100 |
| ≥7 | 5 | 100 | 0 | 100 |

¹Includes offers that were either used for transplantation or declined/accepted and not used based on donor or organ related reasons (excluding fast track offers)

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- 4 Given the above information, the following criteria for entry into the fast track scheme are proposed for DBD donor hearts:
 - a. Three heart transplant centres decline the heart for a donor or organ quality related reason. The reason given may differ between centres but must relate specifically to donor or organ quality.
 - b. When a heart is available at short notice from a UK DBD donor, i.e.:
 - Aortic cross-clamp is expected within 90 minutes of the referral to NHSBT, or
 - The heart has already been removed or is in the process of removal, and
 - All UK centres have not already had an opportunity to decline the heart
 - c. A heart is available from Europe

- 5 Offers of hearts meeting the Fast Track offer scheme criteria will be made to all centres simultaneously. Offers will be made by Hub Operations by either simultaneous text message to pager/mobile phone or facsimile transmission of donor information. Centres must respond by telephone to a Fast Track offer to Hub Operations within 45 minutes of the offer if they wish to accept. Hub Operations will not follow-up those centres that do not respond within this time. Centres not responding will be deemed to have declined the offer.

- 6 The fast-tracked heart will then be allocated to the first accepting centre and may be used for a super-urgent, urgent or non-urgent patient. However, if more than one centre wishes to accept the Fast Track Offer, negotiation can be made between centres. Group 1 patients will be allocated organs before Group 2 patients. Centres accepting for Group 2 patients must wait until the 45 minutes have lapsed to ensure no centre is accepting for a Group 1 patient.

ACTION

- 7 Members are asked to consider the proposed revision to the heart fast track scheme detailed in this paper. If endorsed, the revised arrangements will be introduced as soon as possible, and a target date of 1st June 2020 should allow enough time for ODT Duty Office staff to be fully informed and trained.

- 8 Should the revised scheme be implemented, it will be audited regularly to ensure the scheme is working as intended and delivering the desired result, a reduction in the number of discarded hearts and time taken by the ODT Duty Office.

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