

Private & Confidential

1st May 2020

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Dear Colleague,

RE: Donation and transplantation in the COVID-19 pandemic

I am writing as a Medical Director in NHS Blood and Transplant – we are responsible, with commissioners, for Organ Donation and Transplantation across the United Kingdom.

First, we wish to thank you and your transplant team – through coordinated effort we have been able to maintain transplantation as a life-saving intervention for super-urgent and highly urgent patients despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some centres have even been able to carry out kidney transplantation, noting that the combination of dialysis and COVID-19 is a potent one for causing complications and fatality.

We are grateful for high level support for donation and transplantation as demonstrated in the letter from the Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing of 6th April. With this, we are planning recovery of the service in a phased manner working with commissioners, retrieval teams and transplant units. We wish to reassure you that we

1. Acknowledge the impact on ICU resource (in both donation and transplant phases).
2. Have issued central guidance on the points to be considered before extending or reactivating a programme [Click here](#)
3. Will keep the balance of benefit/risk for a waiting list patient at the forefront of any decisions.
4. Note safety of staff as paramount to the delivery of this service.

We have made it clear that a decision to extend or reopen a service is a local one, after scanning resource and examining the COVID-19 profile in the hospital and the community, but we felt that the reassurance of the points noted above combined with nationally produced guidance would be useful at this time.

Please contact us at Lizzie.Abbot-Davies@nhsbt.nhs.uk if you have any concerns or questions.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



Professor John Forsythe
Medical Director
NHS Blood and Transplant