



**Blood and Transplant**

**COVID-19 Bulletin Number 14**

**Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Directorate**

**9<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

We are continuing regular calls with all UK commissioners in planning Deceased Donation, Transplantation and Living Donation, in the context of the pandemic. There are approximately **1500** email addresses on this circulation list, so the reach is reasonable but please encourage colleagues to add their emails, if not already included, to [Caroline.Wills@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:Caroline.Wills@nhsbt.nhs.uk)

A brief update on the picture across the UK. We will continue with the Bulletins on a weekly/ fortnightly basis depending on the information we have to share in the coming weeks. We hope you continue to find them informative and useful.

Thank you for your feedback which has been very positive.

## **Update on Shielding**

We have been made aware by patient representatives and clinical colleagues of some challenges related to the information and communications that patients in England have received about shielding, particularly as lockdown restrictions are lifted. *John Forsythe, Medical Director ODT, Steve Wigmore, President British Transplantation Society and Clara Day, Chair of the Renal Clinical Reference Group, have co-signed a letter to the CMO on this subject*

On Friday, we heard from NHSE commissioners that the Government has committed to reviewing the shielding guidance alongside each review of the wider social distancing measures to ensure that the latest epidemiology is directly considered with advice to clinically vulnerable groups. A letter has gone to the Medical Directors of Trusts to confirm that advice will be reviewed again week commencing 15 June 2020. The government plans to write to all individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL) with information about next steps on shielding advice and the support that will be available to them after this review point.

See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/guidance-and-updates-for-gps-at-risk-patients/>

## **Living Donation**

Three urgent living donor liver transplants were performed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Three centres have now restarted living donor kidney transplants (LDKT) since the last Bulletin and 4 transplants have been performed. Remaining centres hope to restart during June and July. Arrangements vary by region from single centre to collaborative models. Ability to restart or expand LDKT activity is limited due to local constraints. A discussion paper will be tabled at Kidney Advisory Group meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to look at the options for supporting the expansion of living donor kidney transplantation, including the UK living kidney sharing scheme, across the UK.

## **Guidance for Clinicians on Consent**

We have updated the joint NHSBT / BTS guidance on consent. The updated document : NHSBT / BTS guidance for clinicians on consent for solid organ transplantation in adults, children and young people and living organ donation in the context of COVID-19, can be found at the link below:

<https://nhsbtdbe.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/18757/nhsbt-bts-consent-guidance-covid-19-version-2-updated-5th-june-2020.pdf>

## **COVID-19 Testing of Recipients**

A letter in relation to Testing of Recipients for Deceased Organ Donation Letter - Please see attached

## **Delays in the Organ Donation, Organ Retrieval and Transplant Pathway**

Delays during the pathway from donor to transplantation are a continuing source of frustration. Sudden and unexpected delays for uncertain reasons may cause significant upset at best; at worst considerable additional cost and the potential for recipient deterioration.

A recent unplanned yet foreseeable delay has prompted a thorough revision of the operating principles around retrieval delay.

Delays of Mobilisation may occur when, as a natural part of the normal organisation of retrieval, all parties agree that a small delay in NORS teams leaving base can facilitate best management. These can be requested by any party in the chain from donation to transplantation, but the SNOD will decide whether requests are reasonable. Such delays may not be possible if a super-urgent recipient is awaiting an organ.

Intentional delay to allow one centre to perform multiple transplants is not supported, however, if such delays would enable a super-urgent or a paediatric transplant to take place in a centre which is already transplanting, then such a delay may be considered.

Planned Cross clamp delay occurs when the recipient team need to perform irreversible preparatory surgery in the recipient prior to the onset of cold ischaemia. Cardiac recipients who require explant of a Ventricular Assist Device prior to transplant, or a multi-visceral recipient in whom exenteration is required, are two situations which may well require such a delay. Again, the potential that a super-urgent recipient could be compromised in such retrievals will dictate operative management.

Unplanned delays, which occur when new clinical information comes to light during the process, are possibly the most challenging. Late decline of the heart, which is likely the most common cause of such delays, will now precipitate fast-track offering which should conclude prior to the original cross clamp time. If the fast-track organs are declined, the operation proceeds as normal. If accepted, there is a three-hour window prior to cross clamp to enable the new recipient to reach hospital.

With good communication and foresight, the new structure should facilitate better management of expectation and better regulation and governance of this challenging aspect of donation, retrieval and transplantation.

Letter sent to all attached with this bulletin

## Kidney Transplant centres opening

At the time of writing, there are 11 out of 23 adult renal transplant centres open. We know that most other centres have well developed plans to open as well.

Units that stayed open or those who have just returned to accepting offers have often offered to share learning. Of course, there is already an informal network to allow this but if you wish to be put in touch with a colleague who has offered this facility, then please contact us. [Lizzie.Abbot-Davies@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:Lizzie.Abbot-Davies@nhsbt.nhs.uk)

## Facilitating Organ Donation

Up to date donor and transplant numbers per organ group can be found using the link below <https://nhsbtdeb.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/18756/daily-numbers-080620.pdf>

The majority of Specialist Nurses have returned from the front-line and are back to their substantive posts.

## Retrieval Teams

NORS teams remain at almost full capacity and continue to cover all donor retrieval activity. No change from previous bulletin

## Organ Allocation and Offering

### LIVER

We continue to be able to transplant super-urgent and urgent liver patients. At the time of writing there are two super-urgent patients listed.

### RENAL

No change from previous bulletin.

### CARDIAC

We continue to have a number of patients on Urgent heart transplant waiting list. At the time of writing the information below reflects patients waiting

Hearts	Super-Urgent	Urgent
Adults	2	27
Paediatrics	0	17

Lungs	Urgent
Adults	1
Paediatrics	1

We ask that if any centre requires changes to acceptance criteria to notify NHSBT formally, via the Clinical governance team – [clinicalgovernance.odt@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:clinicalgovernance.odt@nhsbt.nhs.uk)

## **Deceased Donor Transplantation – Update**

Please remember that a link to open/closed centres is available

<https://www.odt.nhs.uk/deceased-donation/covid-19-advice-for-clinicians/transplant-centre-closures-and-restrictions/>

We keep it as a web-link since the situation changes regularly.

## **Deceased donor kidney transplantation**

As noted above some centres starting to re-open.

## **Lung Transplantation**

Centres considering on a case-by-case basis.

## **Heart Transplantation**

No change from previous Bulletin.

## **Liver Transplantation**

All units remain open to either urgent or super urgent cases with a case by case study for each donor offer.

## **Pancreas and Islet cell Transplants**

### **Pancreas**

All UK solid organ pancreas transplant centres remain closed.

### **Islet Cells**

There are a few patients who require their second transplant and are nearing the end of the immunosuppression window period – there are two laboratories that are open for islet cell isolation.

## **Multi-Visceral / Intestinal Transplant**

No change from previous bulletin.

## **Tissue Donation**

No change from previous Bulletin.

## Corneal transplantation

### Repeat from previous bulletin

- Orders from now until 31st July have been cancelled, but some tissue is available, and it may well be possible to reinstate cases. Please ring TES customer services to discuss.
- Orders from August onwards will be honoured, **but only if TES customer services receive confirmation that the case will go ahead**
- A new ordering and allocation process will be introduced later this year, details to follow
- It would help NHSBT considerably if corneal transplant surgeons could complete our survey at <https://tinyurl.com/ybr4d6kf>
- Up-to-date information on corneal tissue availability can be found at <http://otagupdate.co.uk>

### Publications/Useful Links

For information only – Clinical Trials document available [here](#)

All information about policies concerning COVID 19 etc in the Euro transplant countries is published [here](#)

BTS/Centre of Evidence for Transplantation have collaborated to provide an open access repository of emerging evidence for solid organ donation and transplantation, which is held within the Transplant Library, available [here](#)

NHS England in relation to COVID-19 and those NHS staff who are self-isolating can be found [here](#)

SaBTO guidance with a new Annex on COVID-19 available [here](#)

### NICE guidance on:

COVID-19 rapid guideline: community-based care of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: dermatological conditions treated with drugs affecting the immune response [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: cystic fibrosis [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: delivery of systemic anticancer treatments [here](#)

COVID-19 Haematopoietic stem cell transplantation [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: critical care in adults [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: dialysis service delivery [here](#)

COVID-19 rapid guideline: gastrointestinal and liver conditions treated with drugs affecting the immune response [here](#)

### **Updated articles on organ transplantation**

1. Ju C, Li N, Qiu T, Xue W, Shi B. Clinical characteristics of novel coronavirus pneumonia in organ transplant recipients and management strategy during the epidemic (1st edition). *Organ Transplantation* 2020;11(2):185-nullJournal Article.
2. Gandolfini I, Delsante M, Fiaccadori E, Zaza G, Manenti L, Degli Antoni A, et al. COVID-19 in Kidney Transplant Recipients. *American Journal of Transplantation* 2020;n/a(n/a):10.1111/ajt.15891
3. Guidelines for organ donation and transplantation in China during novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic. *Organ Transplantation* 2020;11(2):179-nullJournal Article
4. Chen C-Y, Chen SF, Hollander SA, Rosenthal D, Maeda K, Burgart A, et al. Donor Heart Selection During The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study. *The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation* 2020:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healun.2020.03.018>
5. Woolley AE, Mehra MR. Dilemma of Organ Donation in Transplantation and The COVID-19 Pandemic. *The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation* 2020:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healun.2020.03.017>
6. Seminari E, Colaneri M, Sambo M, Gallazzi I, Di Matteo A, Silvia R, et al. SARS Cov2 infection in a renal transplanted patients. A case report. *Am J Transplant* 2020:10.1111/ajt.15902
7. Huang J, Lin H, Wu Y, Fang Y, Kumar R, Chen G, et al. COVID-19 in post-transplantation patients-report of two cases. *Am J Transplant* 2020:10.1111/ajt.15896
8. Cardoso FS. Liver transplantation in an ICU dominated by COVID-19. *Liver Transpl* 2020:10.1002/lt.25770
9. Bin L, Yangzhong W, Yuanyuan Z, Huibo S, Fanjun Z, Zhishui C. Successful Treatment of Severe COVID-19 Pneumonia in a Liver Transplant Recipient. *Am J Transplant* 2020:10.1111/ajt.15901
10. Angelico R, Trapani S, Manzia TM, Lombardini L, Tisone G, Cardillo M. The COVID-19 outbreak in Italy: initial implications for organ transplantation programs. *Am J Transplant* 2020:10.1111/ajt.15904
11. Zhang H, Chen Y, Yuan Q, Xia Q-X, Zeng X-P, Peng J-T, et al. Identification of Kidney Transplant Recipients with Coronavirus Disease 2019. *Eur Urol* 2020:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eururo.2020.03.030>
12. Ju CR, Lian QY, Zhang JH, Qiu T, Cai ZT, Jiang WY, et al. Recommended prophylactic and management strategies for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 infection in transplant recipients. *Chronic Diseases and Translational Medicine* 2020:10.1016/j.cdtm.2020.02.003

### **Reference on organ transplantation**

1. Qin J, Wang H, Qin X, et al. Perioperative Presentation of COVID-19 Disease in a Liver Transplant Recipient. *Hepatology* 2020 doi: 10.1002/hep.31257

The Systematic Review Initiative has started searching the WHO COVID database and MEDRx for pre-peer review manuscripts on topics relevant to NHSBT. Here are the current articles related to organ transplantation. They are case reports and reviews

1. Aslam S, Mehra MR. COVID-19: Yet Another Coronavirus Challenge in Transplantation. *The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation* 2020 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healun.2020.03.007>

2. D'Antiga L. Coronaviruses and immunosuppressed patients. The facts during the third epidemic. *Liver transplantation : official publication of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases and the International Liver Transplantation Society* 2020 doi: 10.1002/lt.25756

3. Guillen E, Pineiro GJ, Revuelta I, et al. Case report of COVID-19 in a kidney transplant recipient: Does immunosuppression alter the clinical presentation? *American Journal of Transplantation : Official Journal of the American Society of Transplantation and the American Society of Transplant Surgeons* 2020 doi: 10.1111/ajt.15874

4. Lu X, Ming C, Wen Z, et al. Clinical analysis of 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on one case with living-related kidney transplantation. *Chinese Journal of Organ Transplantation* 2020;41(0):E006-E06.

5. Pan L, Zeng J, Yang H. Challenges and countermeasures for organ donation during the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic: the experience of Sichuan Provincial People's Hospital. *Intensive Care Medicine* 2020 doi: 10.1007/s00134-020-05978-8

6. Qiu T, Wang J, Zhou J, et al. The report of two cases infection with novel coronavirus (2019-ncov) after kidney transplantation and the association literature analyzation. *Chinese Journal of Organ Transplantation* 2020;41(0):E004-E04.

7. Tu Y, Wu X, Liu F, et al. Two clinical cases of Novel coronavirus pneumonia (NCP) in renal transplant recipients. *Chinese Journal of Organ Transplantation* 2020;41(0):E005-E05.

The Transplantation Society (TTS) and our journal Transplantation have developed online resources to keep you informed on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

- TTS Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard  
[www.tts.org/covid-19](http://www.tts.org/covid-19)
- Transplantation Global Transplantation COVID Report  
[www.tts.org/txicovid19](http://www.tts.org/txicovid19)

We are also requesting contributions and news from the transplant community to be sent to [covid-19@tts.org](mailto:covid-19@tts.org) for inclusion on our resources page.





