



Blood and Transplant

COVID-19 Bulletin Number 18

Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Directorate

23rd July 2020

We are continuing weekly calls with all UK commissioners in the context of the pandemic.

As we mentioned in previous bulletins our attention has turned to second surge planning in collaboration with the Clinical team and UK commissioners. A document has been drawn up and is in the final stages of drafting - more information and detail on this to follow next week.

For today, a few key headlines.

Thanks to Doug Thorburn who has been researching access to Remdesivir with the manufacturer and relevant authorities. Please see below.

Many kidney units have been able to restart Living Donor Transplantation, but these programmes can be more difficult to recover than those for deceased donation. Lisa Burnapp, in conjunction with Kidney Charity organisations, has surveyed living kidney donors. Some results of that survey are intuitive, others a little more surprising. Again, details below.

COVID pneumonia

Remdesivir has been granted conditional marketing approval for COVID pneumonia and four nation commissioning guidance has been produced (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/07/C0654-uk-interim-clinical-commissioning-policy-remdesivir-for-patients-hospitalised-with-covid-19-adults-and-c.pdf>).

We are keen to assemble the UK experience of Remdesivir treatment for solid organ transplant patients, whether they fulfil the commissioning brief or not. If you have any such cases could you please notify Douglas Thorburn (douglas.thorburn@nhs.net) to collate for submission to the chair of the commissioning guidance group.

Living Donation

Survey of living kidney donors

With the support of kidney charities, a survey of previous, present and potential living donors was recently performed by NHSBT via social media to understand the willingness of people to consider living donation in the COVID era. Key findings from 240 responses:

- Keen to see programmes re-start
- High level of confidence in clinical teams and the NHS
- Majority of donors willing, if required, to:
 - Move to another centre for surgery
 - Be looked after by another clinical team
 - Undergo remote/virtual assessment where appropriate
- Testing of donors, recipient and staff for COVID-19 and PPE were considered critical
- Outcome for recipient due to COVID-19 influenced willingness to donate more than donor-related considerations for a greater proportion of donors

Access the full survey report at: <https://nhsbtdbe.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/19170/living-donor-survey-june-july-2020.pdf>

BAME people were under-represented in this sample. Feedback from patient representatives suggests that there may be increased concern about the impact of COVID-19 and living donation for people from BAME backgrounds.

Transplant centres opening

The majority of kidney units are now open for deceased donor transplant. A full list of units now open can be found [here](#). At the time of writing 2 units remain closed to deceased donor kidney transplant and 10 units have opened to living kidney donation.

All other transplant centres liver, heart, lung, multi-visceral transplant centres are now open to transplantation. A few Islet and pancreas centres remain closed but are expected to re-open shortly.

Facilitating Organ Donation

We are pleased to report a continued increase in donor and transplant activity. Up to date donor and transplant numbers per organ group can be found using the link below.

<https://nhsbtdbe.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/19259/daily-numbers-230720.pdf>

Organ Allocation and Offering

No changes this week.

Publications/Useful Links

Please see the link below to a report published by the Academy of Medical Sciences at the request of Prof Sir Patrick Vallance.

The report is fundamentally about the potential for winter pressures coinciding with a second wave of coronavirus and concentrates on some basic public health measures.

<https://acmedsci.ac.uk/file-download/51353957>

All previous publication links can be found on earlier bulletins.

<https://www.odt.nhs.uk/deceased-donation/covid-19-advice-for-clinicians/>