

22 February 2021

To: Transfusion Laboratory Managers, Transfusion Practitioners, Consultant Haematologists with responsibility for Blood Transfusion, Hospital Transfusion Committee Chairs

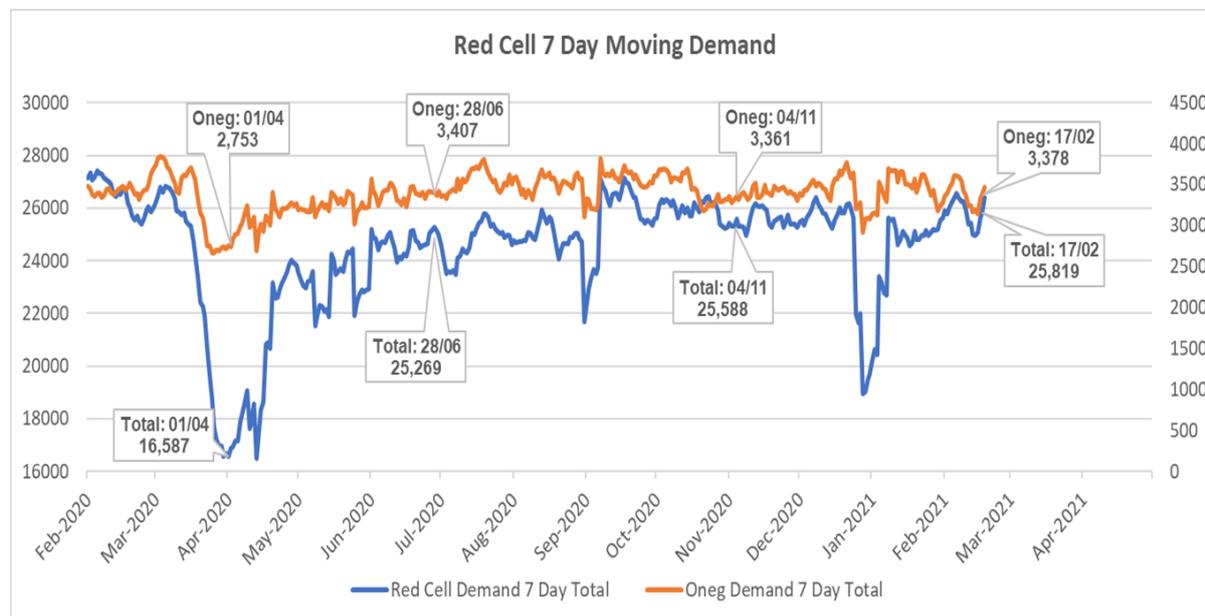
Dear Colleague

We are very grateful for your ongoing support and collaboration in helping to manage the supply of blood components during this challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We last provided an update on our stock position mid December 2020. We felt it important to provide a further update on hospital demand as we start to move out of the latest COVID-19 pandemic wave.

NHSBT has continued to work to maximize our collection activity and our overall blood stock levels remain in a good position.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, total red cell demand fell by approximately 35%, increasing in the last few months to around 5% below expected demand for this period. In contrast, O D negative red cell demand recovered quickly and is now within the target of 13% of total red cell demand.



We face a challenge over the coming weeks in accurately forecasting demand as hospitals continue to adapt services and where possible, resume services. We want to ensure that our stock profile across all blood groups and components remains adequate to meet patient need.

We would therefore be grateful for your help with the following:

1. Intelligence to support NHSBT demand forecasting

- We continue to rely on you to keep us updated with any changes in your hospital activity that may result in a change in demand for blood components.

Please email any intelligence to covid19bloodrecovery@nhsbt.nhs.uk or discuss with your local PBM Practitioner or Hospital Customer Service Manager.

We are very grateful for those Trusts that are keeping us regularly updated and the continued support of the National Transfusion Laboratory Managers Group.

2. Stock Management

- Please ensure stock levels are appropriate to meet local demand and where possible, operate a “first in, first out” policy for issue of red cells; this will assist in preserving O D negative red cells and minimise transfusion to avoid time expiry.
- Limit over specification of O D negative red cell requests, including requests for “fresh red cells”, unless a patient specific requirement.
- Continue to accept a proportional share of K+ units.

3. Maintaining supply of blood components

We have taken a number of additional measures to ensure ongoing sufficiency of supply during the pandemic. These measures include:

- Proactively managing communications with donors encouraging them to keep their appointments
- Working closely with venues to ensure that we can continue to run collection sessions whilst maintaining social distancing measures
- Recruiting additional staff to provide cover for those affected by COVID-19

If you have any questions, please contact your local Patient Blood Management Practitioner or Hospital Customer Service Manager.

We would like again to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for working with us to maintain the supply of blood components and thank you in anticipation of your ongoing support.

Kind Regards,

Catherine Howell OBE

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NHS Blood and Transplant

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