

# Navigating the COVID pandemic in Leeds

Matthew Welberry Smith  
Consultant Transplant Physician

- Themes
  - Rearrangements and flexibility
  - Timeline in Leeds
  - Communication
  - Data (and lack of it)
  - Ethics
  - Re-emerging and learning



Leeds Transplant  
Centre



Leeds Kidney  
Unit





- Rearrangement
  - Staff
  - Rotas (nights!)
  - Locations of care
  - Remote working
  - Regular consultant team (virtual) meetings
  - Insecurity
  - Initial intense UK wide networking



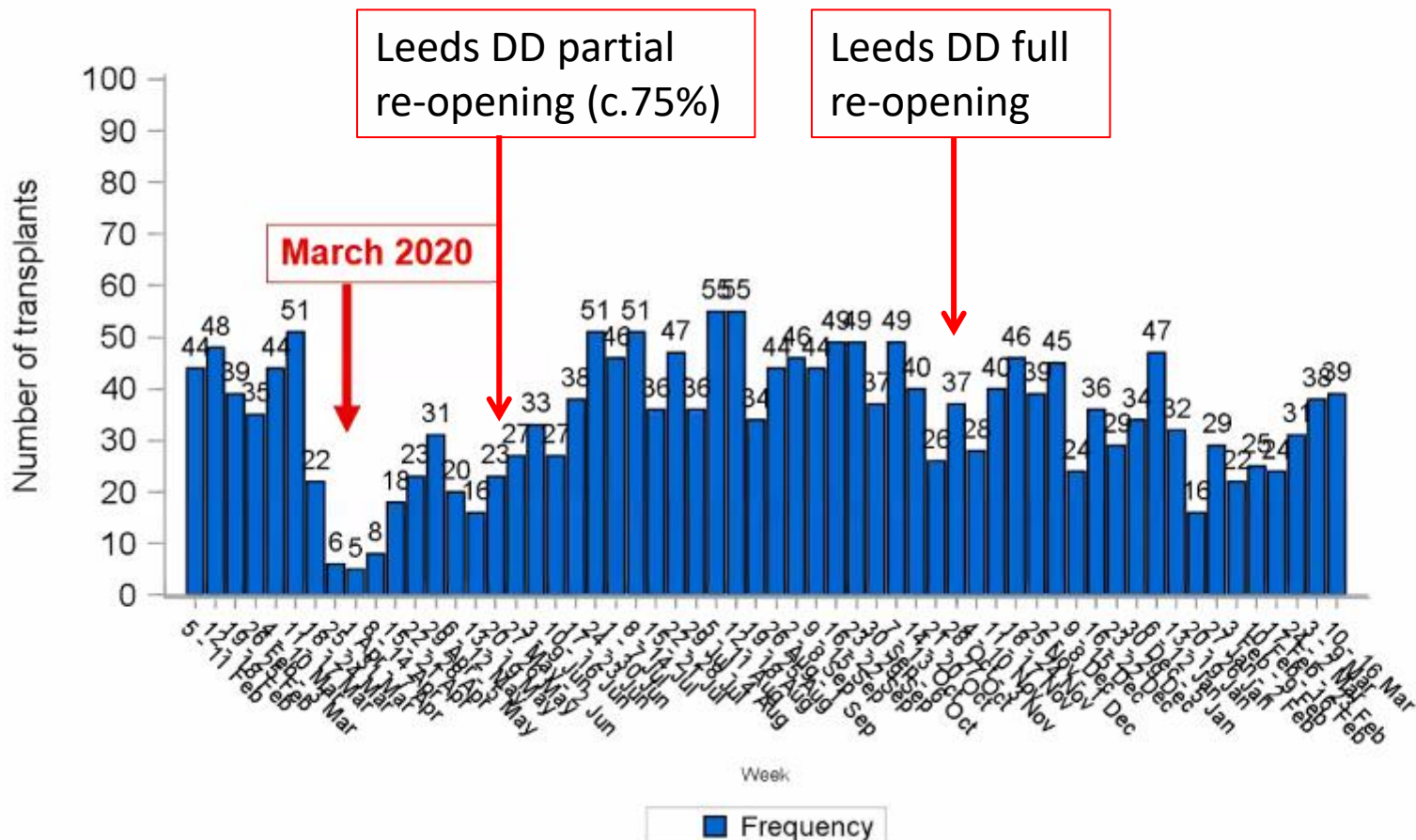


## Timeline in Leeds:

- Closure
  - 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020
  - Included closure of LD programme
- Re-opening
  - Partial deceased programme 18/5/20 (approx. 75% of list)
    - “High risk” and >70y excluded
  - LD assessments restarted 1/6/20
  - Restarted LD transplants 31/7/20
  - Restarted use of Alemtuzumab 23/9/20
  - Fully open deceased programme 26/10/20

# UK deceased donor kidney transplants

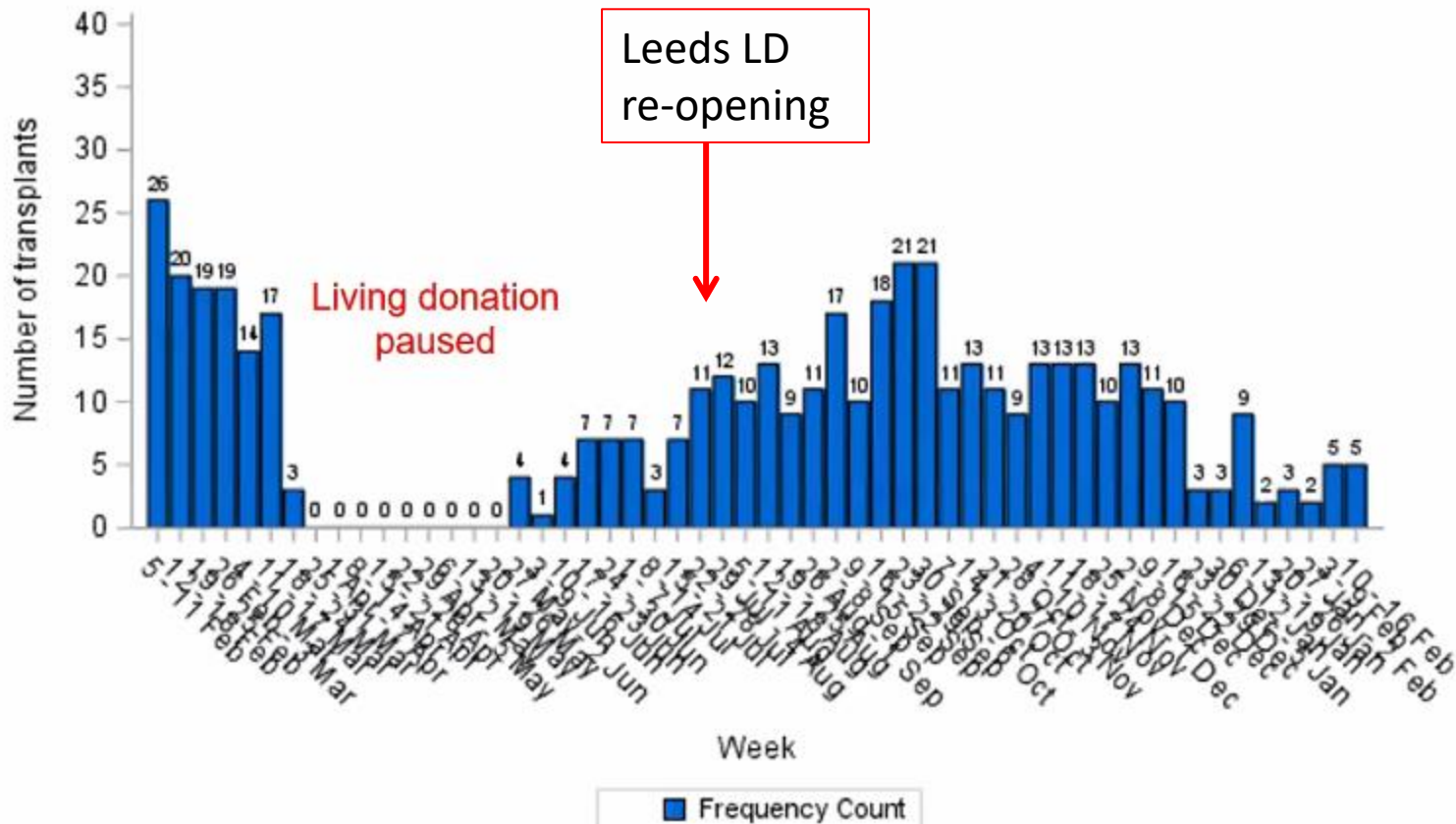
5 February 2020 – 16 March 2021



# UK living donor kidney transplants

5 February 2020 – 16 February 2021

**NHS**  
Blood and Transplant





# Communication

- To patients and referring hospitals
- Repeatedly!
- FAQs
- Consenting for re-opening
- Social media
- Media spotlight!

## Frequently Asked Questions about Kidney Transplantation at Leeds during COVID19 pandemic

5<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### **Q: Is the kidney transplant programme in Leeds still running?**

At the moment the programme is suspended. We are working hard to re-open in the near future, which is one of the reasons you have been sent this letter and FAQ sheet.

### **Q: Will I have a choice about whether to be active on the kidney transplant waiting list when the programme re-opens?**

Yes. We will contact you to discuss this. You will always have a choice. We want that choice to be informed because of the new circumstances created by the coronavirus COVID19 pandemic.

### **Q: What do I do if I am not well at the moment, and think I might have coronavirus COVID19?**

Please contact either your GP, NHS 111, or use 999 in a medical emergency. If you are a haemodialysis patient contact your dialysis unit before attending for any dialysis.

### **Q: Will I need to do anything particular if I become active on the kidney transplant list again?**

Yes. We will ask you to shield yourself (also called self-isolation). This is to reduce the risk of you getting coronavirus COVID19 whilst waiting for a kidney transplant. Patients with serious kidney disease are considered extremely vulnerable and have already been advised to shield themselves at this time. You will need to continue shielding even if the government removes the wider lockdown restrictions for other people. You also need to consider whether any shielding is necessary within your household. For example, if you have a household member who works with coronavirus patients themselves, you would need to shield from them within the house, or choose to alter your living arrangements to prevent close contact in another way.

# Communication?!

Unexpected media  
spotlight!

BBC Sign in Home News Sport Weather iPlayer Source

## NEWS


Home | Brexit | Coronavirus | UK | World | Business | Politics | Tech | Science | Health | Family & Education

England | Local News | Regions | York & North Yorkshire

### Coronavirus: Girl needing new kidney 'in limbo' as op postponed

6 May 2020

Coronavirus pandemic



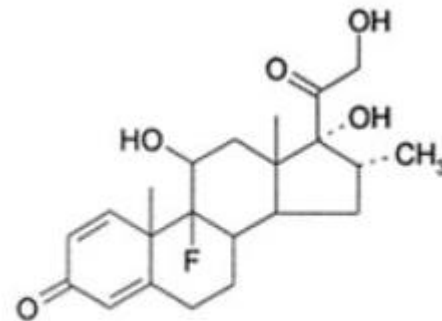
Sarah Emmott, six, was set for a kidney transplant - but her operation has been postponed

A six-year-old girl who needs a new kidney has been left in limbo after her transplant was postponed due to coronavirus, her parents have said.

Sarah Emmott had her failing kidneys removed at the end of February but four weeks later her planned surgery from a live donor was put on hold.

She is now having to undergo dialysis three times a week to keep her alive.

- Data driven practice?
  - Lack of reliable data to inform decisions
    - Prevention
    - Treatment



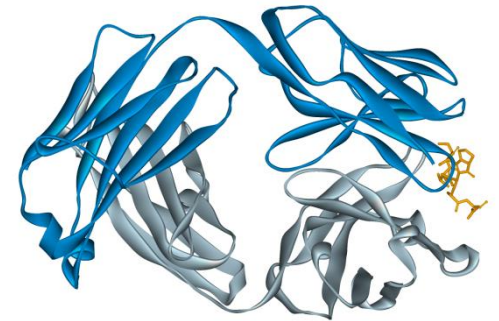
Dexamethasone



- Data driven practice (example)

- Alemtuzumab induction

- Suspended on reasonable hypothetical concerns
- Audited retrospective patients
- Parallel audit of changes in outcomes with Basiliximab induction (rejection and readmission rates)
- Comparison with relevant other centres' data
- Data driven return to Alemtuzumab use



- Ethics

- The ethics of how transplant services chose to behave
- An under discussed aspect of the COVID pandemic?
- Risk assessments based on, at best, incomplete data
- Who to including in partial re-opening?
- Even if we think we can differentiate levels of risk, can the patient simply consent to take the risks?
- Meta-ethics of competition for local resources strongly highlighted
- Vaccination ethics

- Re-emerging
  - Complexity of deciding what constitutes increased risk
    - Example: what constitutes immunological complexity?
  - Consenting patients
  - Helping others (NTC)
  - Vaccination and attendant patient concerns
  - Vaccine clinics





- Learning
  - What went well?
    - Communicating
    - Data driven aspects of practice
    - Reopening
    - Vaccinating (including live donors)



The Leeds Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust



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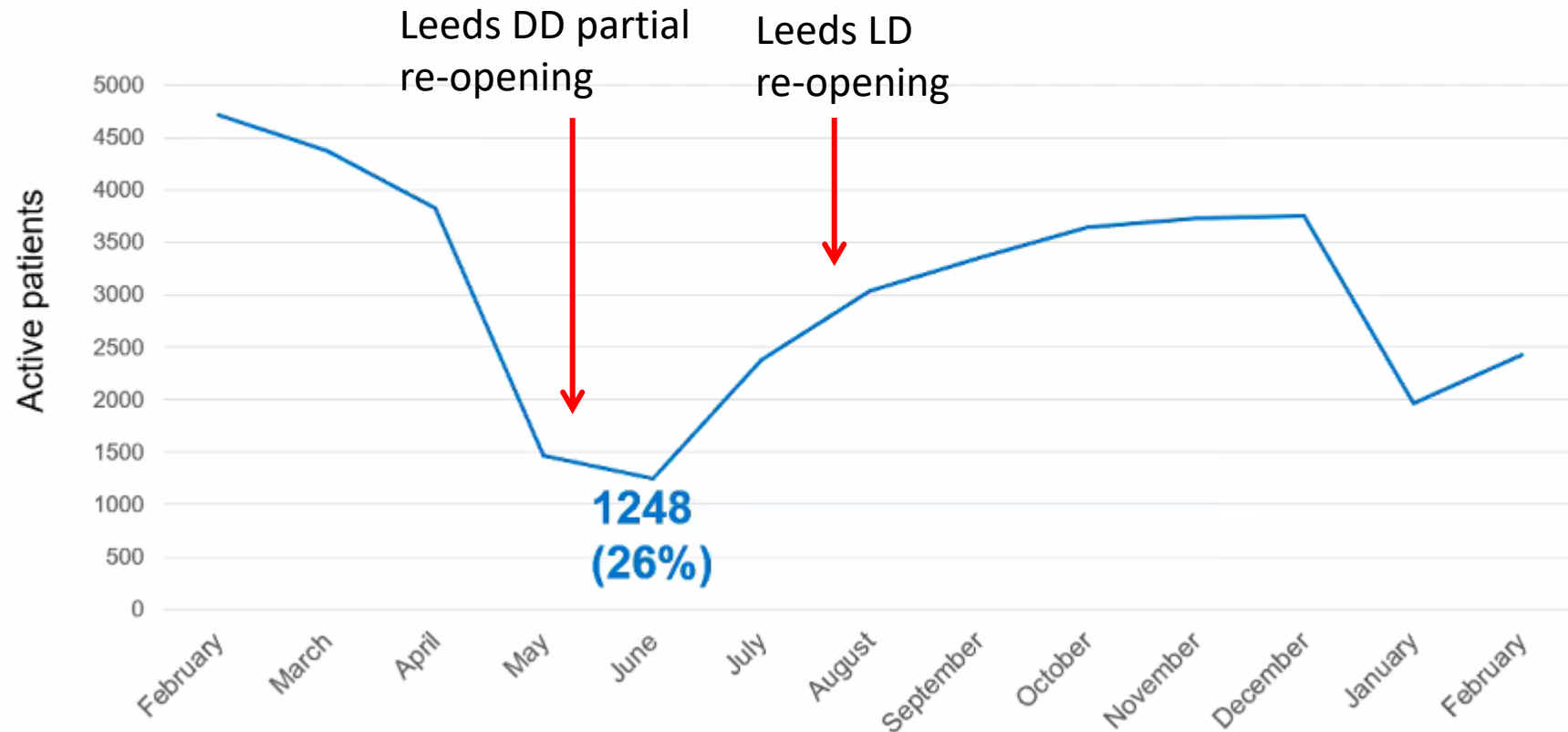


# Extra slides



## Active kidney waiting list, monthly 2020/21

**NHS**  
Blood and Transplant



## 2020/21 activity

Leeds LD  
re-opening  
Blood and Transplant

**Figure 1** Effect CoVID-19 has on Deceased Donation and Transplantation  
Number of deceased donors and transplants by week since 1 April 2019

