



Safe supplies 2020: Progress in a pandemic

Joint working between NHS Blood and Transplant and UK Health Security Agency

For The Assessment of Individualised Risk (FAIR)



A new donor selection policy was implemented across the UK in 2021 allowing people with a new or multiple partners in the last three months to donate irrespective of gender. This change was recommended from the work of FAIR that concluded in 2020.



FAIR is a collaboration between the UK blood services, Public Health England (PHE) (now UKHSA), University of Nottingham, charities and campaign groups representing people affected by this policy change including LGBT+ groups, people affected by HIV, donors and recipients of blood components.



FAIR triangulated evidence to assess the accuracy, reliability and acceptability of questions about sexual behaviours with increased chance of acquiring a blood borne disease. A policy based on an individual's sexual activity was perceived as fair, more inclusive and unlikely to deter people from donating.



Epidemiology

Donors

- syphilis detection increasing
- rates of virus detection are very low

General population

- HIV in decline
- MSM remain disproportionately affected
- increases in syphilis and gonorrhoea



Psychosocial

Modelling found behaviours with increased chance of acquiring a blood borne disease to

- statistically cluster
- be reliably reported
- likely to be self-reported

Questions to all donors based on FAIR evidence

- have you ever had syphilis?
- In the last 3 months...
- have you had gonorrhoea?
 - have you used drugs during sex?
 - have you had more than one or a new partner? and if yes, did you have anal sex?



Behaviour

A greater chance of acquiring a blood borne disease was found for people

- having sex with new or multiple partners
- having anal sex compared with vaginal or oral
- inconsistent condom use
- using drugs during sex (Chemsex)
- having had a bacterial sexually transmitted disease (syphilis or gonorrhoea)