

NHS BLOOD AND TRANSPLANT

RETRIEVAL ADVISORY GROUP

BLUE LIGHT AUDIT

INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report presents usage of blue lights when transporting organs and NORs teams. Discussions have been held between NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Transport (DfT) to clarify the current legal position and to improve the governance for the activation of blue lights while carrying organs for the purpose of transplantation.
- 2 The usage of blue lights was analysed for the transport of organs and teams for both living and deceased donors.

COHORT

- 3 The cohort considered was journeys for organs and NORs teams where blue lights were used between 1 May 2022 and 31 July 2022, data as at 12 August 2022. Data on the usage of blue lights were provided by the transport provider IMT and linked to the UK Transplant Registry using ODT Donor ID.

RESULTS

- 4 In the period, there were 540 journeys for organs recorded by IMT, with 82 (15%) involving blue light use. **Table 1** shows what was being transported for the 82 blue light journeys, with 13 journeys carrying a NORs team and organ, 1 carrying liver and kidney, and 1 carrying kidney and pancreas. 39 (48%) of the journeys involved livers, and 11 (13%) involved living kidneys. The 20 heart journeys corresponded to 16 donors, with 2 being DCD donors. **Table 2** shows the centre requesting the blue light use.
- 5 For the 82 blue light journeys, there were in total 277 activations, corresponding to a mean of 3.4 activations per journey. The median duration of blue lights use was 19.9 minutes, and **Figure 1** shows the distribution of times blue light were used for, with the median represented by dashed red line.
- 6 The day of week and time of day at which the use of blue lights first commenced is presented as a heat map in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**. Heat maps are used here to indicate the level of activity, darker shades are used to indicate higher activity. **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** show that most blue light journeys took place during daytime between 07:00 and 19:00 with Monday being the most common day.

Table 1 Material being transported using blue lights, 1 May 2022 – 31 July 2022

Material	N
NORS team	13
Liver	39
Pancreas	2
Heart	20
Lung	3
Kidney	18
Bloods	1
Equipment	1
Total	82*

* Includes 15 journeys (13 NORS team and organ, 1 liver and kidney, and 1 kidney and pancreas), which are all counted in each individual count

Table 2 Centre requesting use of blue lights, 1 May 2022 – 31 July 2022

Centre	N
St James University Hospital Leeds	14
Kings College Hospital	11
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham	10
Freeman Hospital	7
Addenbrookes Cambridge	6
Guys Hospital	5
Harefield Hospital	5
Golden Jubilee National Hospital	4
Royal Papworth Hospital	4
Royal Free	3
Edinburgh Royal Infirmary	2
Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children	2
University Hospital Wales	2
Belfast City Hospital	1
Glenfield General	1
Manchester Royal Infirmary	1
Nottingham City	1
Sheffield Northern General	1
University Hospital Of Zurich	1
Wythenshawe Hospital Manchester	1
Total	82

Figure 1 Duration of blue light usage, 1 May 2022 – 31 July 2022

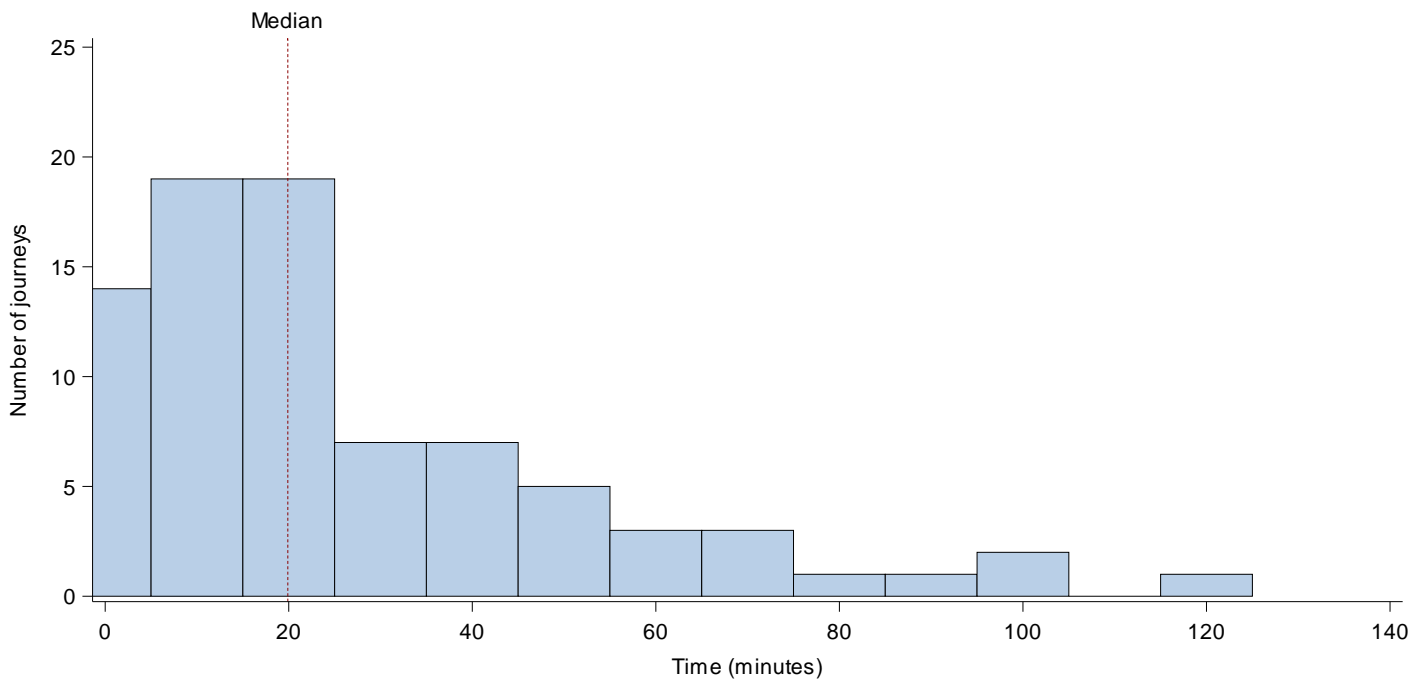


Figure 2 Heat map for day and time of blue light initial use, 1 May 2022 – 31 July 2022

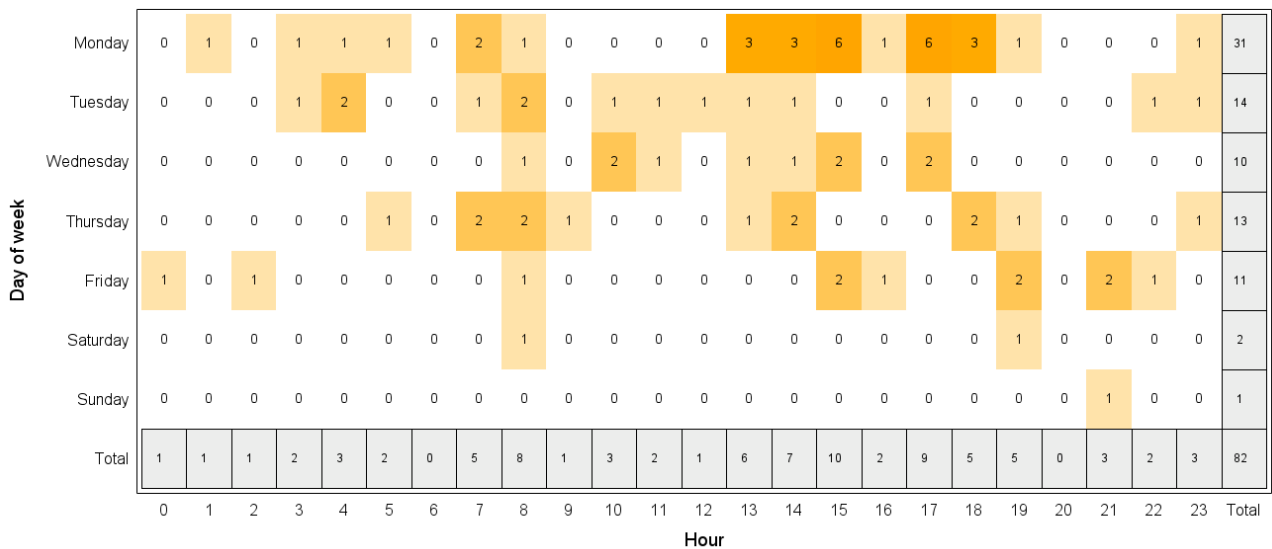


Figure 3 Heat map for time of blue light initial use, 1 May 2022 – 31 July 2022

