



Blood and Transplant

NHSBT Public Board Meeting

28 November 2023

Chief Executive's Report

Status: Official

It is nearly 6 months since I took up post as the Chief Executive Officer and I find myself continuously inspired and motivated by the life-changing and world-leading work we do across the organisation. Last month I attended both the European Blood Alliance and the Alliance of Blood Operators and was proud to see how work that we have led is also delivering benefits for patients around the world.

This month I attended the NHSBT Stakeholder Event, which brought together our Charity and 3rd Sector Partners, to provide an update on progress and latest developments across the organisation. It also gave an opportunity to come together as a community, to discuss shared priorities for action and discuss how we can work together to deliver the improvements in experience and outcomes for all our donors and the patients who rely on our services. I am grateful to everyone who gave up their time to attend and share their views and ideas. We will be holding more regular events in the future, so that we can keep to discussion going.

I have also launched an internal consultation on a new People Plan, seeking views from our teams on how to make NHSBT an organisation that people want to join, stay and where they can thrive. The responses to the consultation will inform the final plan, which will be launched in the new year. It will complement our ongoing Forward Together programme, which will deliver improvements in culture and make NHSBT an intentionally inclusive organisation.

1. People

Recruitment

There are a number of important recruitment activities either underway or recently completed. The recruitment process for a permanent Chief Digital and Information Officer is now in progress. Dr Tom Bullock has been appointed interim Chief Scientific Officer. Dr Vicki Chalker has started in her new role as Deputy Chief Scientific Officer for NHSE but has also been seconded back to NHSBT for one day a week for a year. This is to maintain strong scientific links between NHSBT, NHSE and DHSC on blood cell genomics and includes the NHSE programme to type multi-transfused patients, together with the work in Transfusion 2024 and the Department of Health and Social Care's Implementation Steering Group for Organ Utilisation.

Therapeutic Apheresis Services has recruited its first ever Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP). ACPs can carry out advanced nursing procedures such as donor

medicals, freeing up consultant time. This is part of our Therapeutic Apheresis Service people plan. More ACPs will be recruited as we scale the number of procedures carried out.

The Director of Nursing joined in October 2023 and has commenced her induction process. This has included visits with clinical teams in Cardiff, Tooting and Liverpool to date and introductions with members of the Board, Executive, Senior Leadership Team and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion networks. Establishing the nursing directorate is in progress, working with operational directors to transfer line management of divisional Chief Nurses and their teams. Going forward this role will be called Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) in line with professional protocol for this board position.

Blood Supply ran an inaugural Leadership College during October. Managers from across the directorate joined a 3-day training programme run by a combination of NHSBT Senior Managers and external speakers aimed at boosting leadership competencies across the directorate. The feedback from delegates was outstanding. Participation in the programme will be extended through a combination of future residential colleges and department cascades.

The first-ever Plasma Collections Team conference took place this month. The conference provided a platform for frontline colleagues to connect with each other, contribute to NHSBT's People Plan, learn about plasma fractionation, and reflect on ways to improve service for our donors. Colleagues had the opportunity to hear inspirational stories from plasma recipients and participate in an interactive Q&A session with Plasma Senior Leaders. It was a successful event with positive engagement and feedback. Plasma is also piloting a number of corporate People initiatives including Career Kickstart, Corporate Induction and Behaviour Framework. Roadshows have taken place at all plasma centres.

2. Finance

We've stabilised blood stocks during the current year and are confident in retaining this healthy position as we approach winter. However, in achieving this, we have seen a higher-than-expected cost through the year – mostly in staffing to strengthen our collection capacity. While this puts pressure on our finance position, we are able to mitigate this by using some of our cash reserves in year. Any similar costs next year may need to be addressed through changes to our pricing.

Work is now well underway shaping the funding envelope for next year. All divisions are starting to develop budgets reflecting their respective plans and strategies. A forward look has also been provided to the National Commissioning Group in mid-November, setting expectations and updating on service and product delivery.

3. Service Delivery

The Executive Team continues to closely monitor our blood and plasma stocks, to ensure that we can continue to meet demand. Blood stocks have recently held at target levels of approximately 6-7 days, with some variation by blood group. Prompt action

was taken in those areas with lower stock levels. Marketing activity targeted donors with the necessary blood types and stock levels are recovering. While some stocks may take several weeks to fully recover to target levels, we anticipate steady growth will ensure we avoid hospital shortage alerts at this stage. We continue to closely monitor progress and take appropriate action, but we are confident that our approach will place us in a strong position as we move in to Winter.

Similarly, increases in Source Plasma for Medicines have been driven by the Donor Experience team's actions. The 'All types can save lives' campaign launched on Monday 6 November, running for two weeks to increase knowledge of donation eligibility for those who have never made a plasma donation and encourage them to make their first booking. Our at home testing has enabled us to recruit over 3,500 new stem cell donors to the register.

NHSBT has received £150k from NHS England and £10k from the Scottish Government to support the new UK wide living donor liver program. We continue to utilise high risk Donor after Circulatory Death (DCD) organs to reduce the waiting lists.

The Patient Safety Incident Response Framework will be implemented within NHSBT on 1st April 2024. Implementation will be phased to allow the organisation to develop new approaches to learning from Patient Safety Incidents (PSI) and to develop colleagues undertaking new roles associated with Patient Safety. This is a cultural shift and complements the People Plan. Patients and Donors will be proactively engaged in the learning response to incidents that involve them or their family member and will have more involvement in the final report and action planning. Data collation and subsequent analysis is a significant issue in relation to PSIRF and it will be necessary to make changes to NHSBT systems to enable triangulation of data and effective oversight of patient safety incidents.

4. Innovation

The Hospice referral pathway project to increase ocular donation has been launched in 5 Hospices, based on the recommendations from a key study funded by the NIHR. Since starting in September, there have already been new referrals and donations, with a conversion rate of 88%.

The results of the CRYOSTAT-2 trial were published in JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) last week, answering an important question about the use of cryoprecipitate in the treatment of major trauma. The collaborative study run by NHSBT Clinical Trials Unit involved 1604 participants across 26 major trauma centres. It found no improvement in clinical outcomes for the addition of high-dose cryoprecipitate compared to standard care in the management of trauma patients with critical bleeding. A 90 second video summary from the investigators can be viewed here - [CCR23 \(criticalcarereviews.com\)](https://criticalcarereviews.com/CCR23).

Laura Green, NHSBT Principal Investigator, has been awarded £1.5 million from the National Institute for Health and Care Research to run a multicentre randomised controlled trial comparing Fresh Frozen Plasma (FFP) versus Prothrombin Complex Concentrate (PCC) in adult patients who are bleeding following cardiac surgery. The trial will be run by NHSBT Clinical Trials Unit.

5. Donor and Patient Experience

We've achieved the highest levels of satisfaction from our donors in both blood and plasma with 83% of donors rating the experience 'great'. We've launched new tools to share donor feedback with our front-line teams and have launched a new daily plasma survey to enable us to close the feedback loop faster.

We have conducted over 10 in-depth interviews and a co-design workshop, with local leaders and donors, to guide the design of the look and feel of our new Brixton donor centre. Whilst the new site is being developed, we have a number of donor sessions in nearby locations, so that we build awareness and support within the community.

The Digital Donor Experience Product Centre, along with Donor Experience colleagues, have delivered "Integrated Onboarding", allowing potential donors of plasma and blood to register and book their appointments online through Donor Portal and the Give Blood App.

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