TO: Transfusion Laboratory Manager, Transfusion Practitioner, Chair of RTC, Chair of HTC, Consultant Haematologist with Responsibility for Blood Transfusion and England EPRR.

15 December 2023

Update on Red cells and Platelets Stock Levels over the bank holiday.

Dear Colleagues

Whilst we can meet current demand with overall stocks of red cells and platelets in the green phase except for A- platelets which is in pre-amber, our stock of group O and B- red cells and A- platelets are vulnerable over the bank holidays and may be further impacted by supply disruptions or spikes in demand.

We are doing all we can to improve stocks but will need your help to maintain an uninterrupted supply and ask that you kindly take the following actions.

Red Cells

• Reduce stockholding of O D positive, O D negative, and B D negative red cells where possible. A small reduction will make a big difference. A routine delivery will be provided on 26 December.

• Stocks will be issued on a first in first out basis with age limit requests only followed in line with clinical guidelines.

• Take a proportional share of K+ units.

• Continue to implement best practise stock management principles to ensure efficient use and reduce wastage to a minimum.

• Continue to implement Patient Blood Management recommendations to support safe and appropriate use and that alternatives to transfusion are considered.

• Consider extending the interval between transfusions if safe to do so.

Platelets

• Reduce stockholding of A- platelets where possible. A small reduction will make a big difference.

• Please do not request long dated platelets.

• Match ABO group rather than rely on A- platelets as this provides better patient outcomes.

• Accept and use both apheresis and pooled platelets for your patients (except where there is a requirement for HLA/HPA matched platelets)

• Ensure transfusions are given in accordance with good clinical practice and national guidelines for adults and children.

• Consider extending the interval between prophylactic transfusions if safe to do so.
We would like to thank you in advance for your support. We will provide an update as necessary. If you have any questions, please contact your Customer Service Manager.

Alternatively phone our Response Desk on 0208 201 3107, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday; we’ll be pleased to help.

Kindly cascade to laboratory and clinical staff as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Farrukh Shah  
Medical Director – Transfusion  
NHS Blood and Transplant

Save a life  
Give blood