

## Blood and Transplant

**Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Public Board Meeting of  
NHS Blood and Transplant  
NHSBT Liverpool Centre, 14 Estuary Banks, Speke, L24 8RB and MS Teams  
Tuesday 28 November 2023 11:30 -12:45**

| <b>Present</b>                         |  |   |
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| <b>Voting Members</b>                  | Peter Wyman  | Chair   |
|  | Caroline Serfass   | Non-Executive Director                                    |
|  | Piers White  | Non-Executive Director                                    |
|  | Rachel Jones   | Non-Executive Director                                    |
|  | Jo Farrar  | Chief Executive Officer                                   |
|  | Wendy Clark  | Deputy Chief Executive Officer                            |
|  | Anthony Clarkson   | Director of Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation |
|  | Carl Vincent   | Chief Financial Officer                                   |
|  | Deborah McKenzie   | Chief People Officer                                      |
|  | Gail Mifflin   | Chief Medical Officer and Director of Clinical Services   |
| <b>Non-voting Members</b><br>(Virtual) | Stephanie Itimi  | Associate Non-Executive Director                          |
|  | Bella Vuillermoz   | Associate Non-Executive Director                          |
|  | Nicola Yates   | Associate Non-Executive Director                          |
|  | Gerry Gogarty  | Director of Plasma for Medicines                          |
|  | Helen Gillan   | Director of Quality                                       |
|  | Paul O'Brien   | Director of Blood Supply                                  |
|  | Rebecca Tinker   | Interim Chief Digital and Information Officer             |
|  | Denise Thiruchelvam  | Director of Nursing                                       |
| <b>In attendance</b>                   |  |   |
|  | Mark Chambers  | Deputy Director of Donor Experience                       |
|  | Brenda Thomas  | Interim Company Secretary                                 |
|  | Claire Williment   | Chief of Staff  |
|  | Christabelle Horner  | Network Trans Officer for LGBTQ+ Network                  |
|  | Tapiwa Songore   | Interim Corporate Governance Manager                      |
|  | (Virtual) Michael Hopkinson  | Department of Health and Social Care, England             |
|  | (Virtual) James How  | Scottish Government                                       |
|  | (Virtual) Pat Vernon   | Welsh Government  |
|  | (Virtual) Joan Hardy   | Northern Irish Government                                 |
| (Virtual) Mark Taylor                  | Assistant Finance Director Planning & Performance ( <i>Item 3.2 only</i> ) |   |
| <b>Observers</b>                       | Bethany Macfarlane   | Graduate Trainee  |
|  | Gregory Burrows-Delbarry   | Graduate Trainee  |
|  | Sandra Newing-Griffiths  | Graduate Trainee  |
|  | Sarina Shah  | Graduate Trainee  |
|  | Stephanie Norris   | Graduate Trainee  |
| <b>Apologies</b>                       | Phil Huggon  | Non-Executive Director                                    |
|  | Prof. Charles Craddock   | Non-Executive Director                                    |

|            |  | Action |
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| <b>1</b>   | <b>Opening Administration</b>  |        |
| <b>1.1</b> | <b>Welcome and apologies</b>   |        |
|            | The Chair welcomed everyone to the 116th NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) Board meeting in public, particularly Denise Thiruchelvam who was attending her first Board meeting and Christabelle Horner, Network Trans Officer for LGBTQ+, who was representing the Networks.  |        |
| <b>1.2</b> | <b>Register of Interests</b>   |        |
|            | The Board noted the Register of Interests. No new interests were declared, and no conflicts of interests were declared in respect of the items on the agenda.  |        |
| <b>1.3</b> | <b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>   |        |
|            | The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.   |        |
| <b>1.4</b> | <b>Matters arising from previous meeting</b>   |        |
|            | The Board noted the action log and agreed to close actions B55, B56 and B53 which had been proposed for closure.   |        |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>Patient Story</b>   |        |
| <b>2.1</b> | <b>Patient Story</b>   |        |
|            | <p>Gail Miflin introduced the report and the Board welcomed Mark and Suzi Hobbs to present the Patient Story.</p> <p>The Board noted that Mark Hobbs was diagnosed with Guillain Barre syndrome in February 2022 and was admitted in Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth. Mark spent more than 300 days in hospital including seven months in intensive care unit (ICU) and used immunoglobulin to treat the condition. The immunoglobulin contained donor antibodies, which helped his immune system to regulate and reduced the attacks on his nervous system. The story highlighted the importance of immunoglobulin in treating rare conditions and the important work NHSBT was doing for patients.</p> <p><b>The Board thanked Mark and Suzi and noted the Patient Story.</b></p>   |        |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>For Assurance</b>   |        |
| <b>3.1</b> | <b>Chief Executive's Board and Board Performance Report</b>  |        |
|            | <p>Jo Farrar presented the report and highlighted the following:</p> <p><u>People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The launch of the internal consultation on the new People Plan. The responses to the consultation would be used to inform the final plan, which was due to be launched in the new year.</li> <li>• The appointment of Denise Thiruchelvam as the Director of Nursing and Tom Bullock as the interim Chief Scientific Officer. Recruitment for a permanent Chief Digital and Information Officer was underway.</li> </ul> <p><u>Delivery</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Future Proofing Blood programme and its importance in improving long-term resilience of the blood service and managing winter pressures.</li> <li>• Progress with Plasma for Medicines and the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework which would be implemented on 1st April 2024.</li> </ul> |        |

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|                   | <p><u>Innovation</u><br/>The results of the CRYOSTAT-2 trial published in the Journal of the American Medical Association on the use of cryoprecipitate in the treatment of major trauma.</p> <p>The Board noted that Serum Eyedrops were behind target in the month resulting in income being £18k below target and asked for the measures being taken to remedy the situation. It was confirmed that the backlog had been cleared and work was underway to reduce waiting times.</p> <p>The Board noted the upward trajectory in sickness absence. It was confirmed that the rate of sickness absence was expected at this time of the year, mainly due to an increase in respiratory illnesses. Measures were in place to minimise this, including the launch of the flu vaccination campaign. Stress related absences were also on the increase and support was being offered to staff through the Employee Assistance Programme. NHSBT levels of sickness were lower when benchmarked against other organisations. Most of the stress related absence were due to life challenges not related to work and Deb McKenzie undertook to circulate the figures for stress related absences.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION B57</b></p> <p>The Board noted that the time to offer was increasing, with current waiting times being 13 weeks, against a target of 11 weeks. Adjustments had been made to the recruitment pathway and it was expected to reduce to 11 weeks in January 2024.</p> <p>The Board sought clarity on the initiatives to improve the business continuity and it was reported that a lot of work had been done in this area, with further work in progress.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the report.</b></p> | <p><b>DMcK</b></p> |
| <p><b>3.2</b></p> | <p><b>Finance Report</b></p>   |                    |
|                   | <p>Carl Vincent presented the report and the Board welcomed Mark Taylor to the meeting. The following issues were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial position was in line with the previous forecast that was presented at quarter two, and NHSBT continued to show a favourable variance of £4m.</li> <li>• Pressure in the Blood Services, which was driven by a combination of contingent labour and overtime to support stabilising stocks, had been met from a combination of underspends in transformation and contingency.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Board noted the report.</b></p>  |                    |
| <p><b>3.3</b></p> | <p><b>Care Quality Commission Action Plan</b></p>  |                    |
|                   | <p>Helen Gillan provided an update on progress with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) action plan, following the Well-Led and regulated activity inspections in June and August 2022. Good progress had been made and of the 33 actions raised to address the six MUST DO (Well-Led) findings, 31 had been closed, two more since the last update to the Board. The Blood Donation actions and SHOULD findings in Therapeutic Apheresis Service (TAS) were successfully closed. The FTSU mobile app was not being pursued, however assurance was provided that there were other effective ways to enable staff to raise any concerns. The action relating to the EDI session would be closed after the EDI session and the action relating to the Board and Committee effectiveness was being progressed.</p> <p>The Board noted that the Director of Nursing would be taking over as the nominated person for CQC.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the report.</b></p>  |                    |

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| <b>4.0</b>   | <b>GOVERNANCE</b>   |  |
| <b>4.1</b>   | <b>Committee Assurance Reports</b>  |  |
| <b>4.1.1</b> | <b>Audit, Risk and Governance Committee</b>   |  |
|              | <p>Piers White reported on the ARGC meeting on 16 November 2023 and the Board <b>APPROVED</b> the recommendation from the Executive Team and ARGC not to have separate Reputational risk and a Commercial risk.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the report.</b></p>   |  |
| <b>4.1.2</b> | <b>Clinical Governance Committee</b>  |  |
|              | <p>Denise Thiruchelvam reported on the Clinical Governance Committee meetings on 28 September 2023 and 17 November 2023.</p> <p>The Board sought clarity on the new policy on children at blood donor sessions and it was noted that the policy had been implemented in September 2023, however this was being reviewed. Feedback had been received from a stakeholder session.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the report.</b></p>   |  |
| <b>4.2</b>   | <b>Governance Update</b>  |  |
|              | <p>The Board discussed the Governance report and requested a quick turnaround for the review of the Board level policies.</p> <p><b>The Board:</b></p> <p>a) <b>Ratified the decision to approve the following Board policies on Convene:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption</li> <li>▪ Dignity at Work</li> <li>▪ Disciplinary</li> <li>▪ Grievance</li> <li>▪ Health, Safety and Wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Modern Slavery</li> <li>▪ Speak up (Whistleblowing)</li> <li>▪ Safeguarding</li> </ul> <p>b) <b>Approved the Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.</b></p> <p>c) <b>Approved the practice of undertaking an external board and committee effectiveness review every three years, with an internal self-assessment of board and committee effectiveness in each of the two intervening years.</b></p> |  |
| <b>5.0</b>   | <b>For Report</b>   |  |
| <b>5.1</b>   | <b>Reports from the UK Health Departments</b>   |  |
| <b>5.1.1</b> | <b>England</b>  |  |
|              | <p>Michael Hopkinson reported on the ongoing work in plasma, O negative blood stocks, building resilience and implementation of the Organ Utilisation Group recommendations and ministerial appointments. It was noted that Andrea Leadsom had lead Ministerial responsibility for NHSBT sponsorship.</p>   |  |
| <b>5.1.2</b> | <b>Scotland</b>   |  |
|              | <p>James How reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Donation &amp; Transplant Group meeting in November and the Annual Nephrologist/Living Kidney Donation Event in December 2023 in Stirling.</li> <li>• Transplant Patient Survey, which would be closing on 29 December 2023.</li> </ul>   |  |

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|              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The appointment of the Transplant Research Manager.</li> <li>• Gathering of data on organ referrals rates.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>5.1.3</b> | <b>Northern Ireland</b>   |  |
|              | <p>Jon Hardy reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing discussions with Northern Ireland Commissioners regarding implementing the recommendations in the Organ Utilisation Report</li> <li>• Engagement with NHSBT on future funding requirements,</li> <li>• Deemed consent project which had now been closed and ongoing public education and awareness activities in relation to the new legislation.</li> </ul> <p>The Board requested an update on learning from the deemed consent project.</p> |  |
| <b>5.1.4</b> | <b>Wales</b>  |  |
|              | <p>Pat Vernon reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organ Donation Week and other events</li> <li>• Transplant Symposium on 6th October 2023 in Cardiff.</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>5.2</b>   | <b>Board Forward Plan</b>   |  |
|              | <p>The Board noted the updated Board Forward Plan. The following to be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donor base KPI for Years 1 to 5</li> <li>• Blood Technology Modernisation (BTM) delivery now in place and not required at every Board. Progress report to come under the Portfolio programme.</li> <li>• Testing Development Programme business case in January new SRO would be Paul O'Brien.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>6</b>     | <b>Closing Administration</b>   |  |
| <b>6.1</b>   | <b>Any Other Business</b>   |  |
| <b>6.1.1</b> | <p>Questions from the Public</p> <p>Stephanie Norris asked what was being done to change access to organ donation waiting lists to address Health inequalities.</p> <p>It was noted that data on inequalities in Scotland was not yet available, however data on variation i.e., how long a patient waits for a transplant was in the public domain and very useful in working with NHSE to help commissioning decisions.</p>   |  |
| <b>6.2</b>   | <b>Close of Meeting</b>   |  |
|              | <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution.</p> <p>Following the close of the meeting, Board members only had a session on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion/ Anti-Racism.</p>  |  |
| <b>6.3</b>   | <b>Date of Next Meeting</b>   |  |
|              | <p>The date of the next meeting is Tuesday, 30 January 2024.</p>  |  |