

UK Government update for NHSBT Public Board, 24 September 2024

New Government

Baroness Merron is the Minister responsible for blood and organ policy as well as the sponsorship of NHS Blood and Transplant. The Minister met with NHSBT CEO and Chair in July and discussed challenges around blood stocks following the cyber-attack in South-East London and action being taken to address these shortages. The Minister understands these challenges and is keen to support NHSBT as we head into Autumn/Winter and the pressures that brings for the NHS.

The Minister visited NHSBT Filton and the Bristol Donor Centre on Friday 20 September to thank donors and to see NHSBT work in action.

Darzi Review

Lord Darzi was commissioned by Secretary of State to conduct an independent investigation of the NHS in England in July. His report was published on 12 September. The report can be found [here](#).

The review was supported by DHSC and NHSE. Findings were informed by 400 pieces of analysis as well as 300 submissions from the public and wider stakeholders. Lord Darzi convened an expert group of more than 70 bodies across the health sector and sought input from NHS staff and patients via focus groups and visits.

Many of the key findings can be mapped across to challenges seen by NHS Blood and Transplant and the patients it seeks to support. For example, Lord Darzi found too many people are waiting too long for services they need – this is something we see with over 7,600 people waiting for an organ transplant and it is why the work that NHSBT, NHSE and DHSC is doing together to better utilise donor organs is so vital. Issues around access to services can also be seen by those waiting for a donor organ and addressing these inequalities for patients was a key plank of the 2023 Organ Utilisation Report and is a driving force for the DHSC led work to implement many of the recommendations now.

Despite these challenges, Lord Darzi also praised staff for their “shared passion and determination to make the NHS better for our patients”.

The report will inform the Government’s ten-year strategy to reform the health service.

Substances of Human Origin (SoHO) – EU quality and safety regulation

The EU SoHO Regs (published in July 2024) will apply in Northern Ireland from 2027, in line with the Windsor Framework agreement. The UK Government is in the early stages of conducting a review to inform Ministerial decisions on options for legislative or non-legislative change, including on equivalence or divergence with the EU Regulation, for the four UK Governments.

Spending Review

As per the update in July, NHSBT and DHSC have worked together to identify funding required to support resilient supply of its life-changing and life-saving products and services. Ministers are considering submissions from arms-length bodies and central Government Departments. Budgets will be confirmed for 24/25 and 25/26 at the end of October 2024 and budgets for the remaining years of the Spending Review period will be confirmed in Spring 2025. Further detail can be found [here](#).