

To: Chief Executive, Medical Director, Transfusion Laboratory Manager, Transfusion Practitioner, Chair of RTC, Chair of HTC, Consultant Haematologist with Responsibility for Blood Transfusion, Chief Nurses, England EPRR

12 December 2024

**Amber Alert continues for Group O Red Cells
Pre-Amber continues for B negative Red Cells
Caution for group A negative platelets over Christmas**

Dear Colleague,

Red Cells

The situation regarding group O and group B negative remains the same and we continue at the current alert status. Continuing lower than expected demand from hospitals is helping us balance out the challenges we are seeing in donor collection. Your action is very much appreciated in helping us balance supply and demand.

Our stock predictions continue to cause us concern as we are predicting a worsening position in January before sustained improvement. We will only exit Amber for group O when we have sufficient confidence in continued stability of supply and demand.

We continue to be unable to offer B negative red cells as a substitution for B Ro. Please accept appropriate substitutions.

Please maintain the actions required in an amber alert, particularly best transfusion and inventory management practice to avoid the need for additional measures. We hope by continuing to work together, we will be able to avoid requiring further measures and exit Amber soon.

Platelets

With platelets being a short shelf-life component (7 days), accurate stock prediction is highly susceptible to modest changes in donation and demand. We are currently concerned that we may have short term supply challenges for A negative and potentially AB negative around Christmas. Please avoid increasing stock wherever possible and take full advantage of scheduled deliveries. We will provide one scheduled delivery on 26 December to support orders.

We are doing everything possible to bring in enough donations. On 11 November we launched a new campaign to encourage people to give the best gift this winter by giving blood. This campaign continues until 27 December. We are also very excited to let you know that the Casualty Christmas Special focuses on the need for blood. The programme airs on BBC One on 21 December and the actors will be on various national TV programmes in the run up to its broadcast talking about the issues raised. We will be using the opportunity to remind people how and where to donate.

Thank you for your ongoing help. If you have any questions, please contact your Customer Service Manager. Alternatively, telephone our response desk on 0208 201 3107, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday; we'll be pleased to help.

Please cascade to laboratory and clinical staff as appropriate.

Kind regards,

Dr Lise Estcourt
Medical Director for Transfusion
NHS Blood and Transplant

Prof.Cheng-Hock Toh
Chair
National Blood Transfusion Committee

