

NHS BLOOD AND TRANSPLANT

RETRIEVAL ADVISORY GROUP

BLUE LIGHT AUDIT

INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report presents usage of blue lights when transporting organs and NORS teams. Discussions have been held between NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Transport (DfT) to clarify the current legal position and to improve the governance for the activation of blue lights while carrying organs for the purpose of transplantation.
- 2 The usage of blue lights was analysed for the transport of organs and teams for both living and deceased donors.

COHORT

- 3 The cohort considered was journeys for organs and NORS teams where blue lights were used between 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024, data as at 12 September 2024. Data on the usage of blue lights were provided by the transport provider IMT and linked to the UK Transplant Registry using ODT Donor ID.

RESULTS

- 4 **Table 1** shows what was being transported for the 124 blue light journeys, with 3 journeys carrying kidney and pancreas, and 2 journeys carrying liver and small bowel. 67 (54%) of the journeys involved livers, and 8 (6%) involved living kidneys. The 36 heart journeys corresponded to 32 donors, 5 were DCD donors. **Table 2** shows the centre requesting the blue light use.
- 5 For the 124 blue light journeys, there were in total 584 activations, corresponding to a mean of 4.7 activations per journey. The median duration of blue lights use was 21.4 minutes, and **Figure 1** shows the distribution of times blue light were used for, with the median represented by dashed red line.
- 6 The day of week and time of day at which the use of blue lights first commenced is presented as a heat map in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**. Heat maps are used here to indicate the level of activity, darker shades are used to indicate higher activity. **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** show that most blue light journeys took place during daytime between 06:00 and 23:00 with Wednesday being the most common day.

Table 1 Material being transported using blue lights, 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024

Material	N
NORS team	31
Liver	67
Pancreas	3
Kidney	18
Small bowel	2
Heart	36
Lung	3
Bloods	0
Equipment	0
Total	124*

* Includes 5 journeys (3 kidney and pancreas, 2 liver and bowel), which are all counted in each individual count

Table 2 Centre requesting use of blue lights, 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024

Centre	N
Kings College Hospital - London	26
Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Birmingham	19
St James University Hospital - Leeds	13
Freeman Hospital - Newcastle	12
Royal Free Hospital - London	11
Golden Jubilee National Hospital	8
Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children	6
Royal Papworth Hospital	5
Royal Infirmary Of Edinburgh	4
Addenbrookes Hospital - Cambridge	3
Harefield Hospital	3
Churchill Hospital - Oxford	2
Guys Hospital - London	2
Hammersmith Hospital	2
Leeds General Infirmary	2
Nottingham City Hospital	2
Berlin Team	1
Derriford Hospital	1
St Georges Hospital - London	1
Wythenshawe Hospital - Manchester	1
Total	124

Figure 1 Duration of blue light usage, 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024

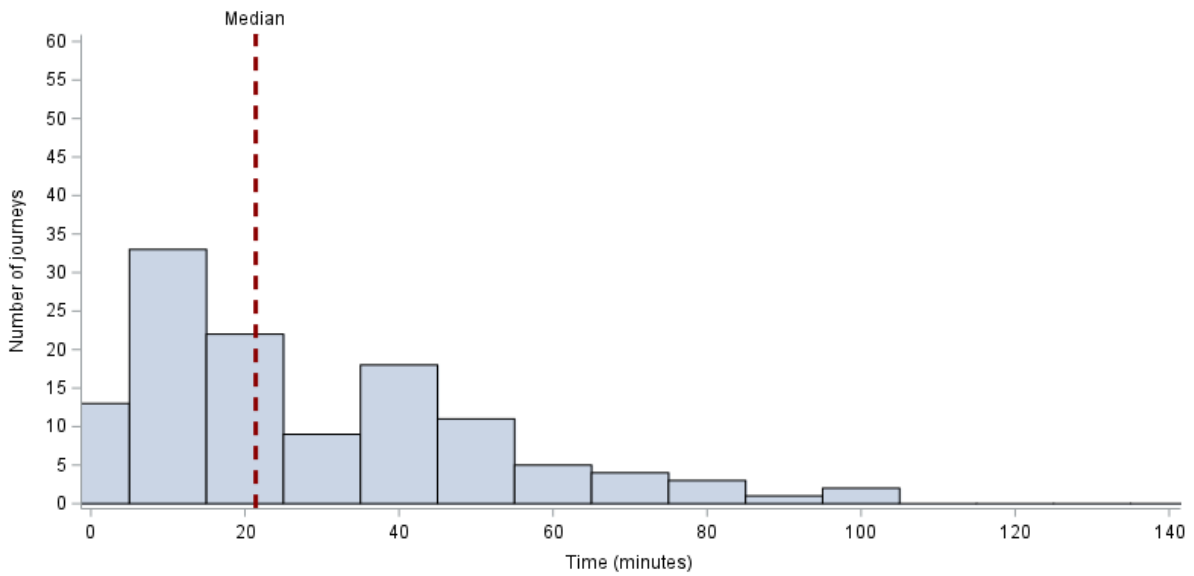


Figure 2 Heat map for day and time of blue light initial use, 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024

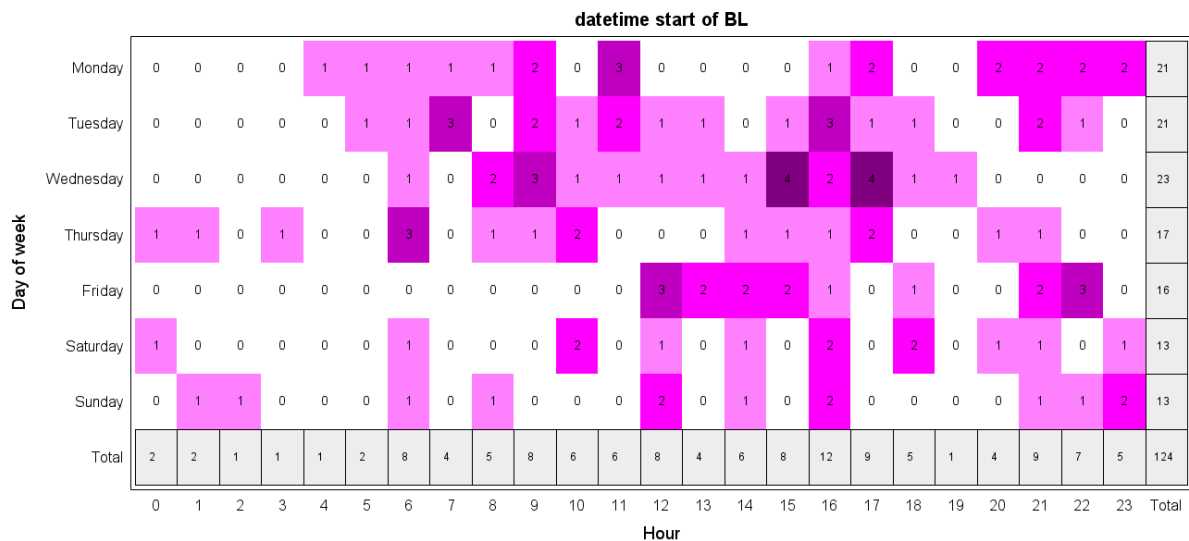


Figure 3 Heat map for time of blue light initial use, 1 March 2024 – 31 August 2024

