

SUSTAINABILITY AND CERTAINTY IN ORGAN RETRIEVAL (SCORE)



SPRING UPDATE
2025



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Introduction

Welcome to the Spring 2025 update from the SCORE programme.

A great deal has progressed since our last update at Christmas, and this newsletter offers a glimpse into the dedication and hard work the team has invested, along with the engagement and valuable input from stakeholders across the pathway, to reach this stage.

We received the fantastic news earlier this year that both Abdominal Normothermic Regional Perfusion (ANRP) and Adult DCD heart perfusion technology business cases have been substantively funded by all UK Health departments, this will enable us to integrate these fully into the National Organ Retrieval Service (NORS).

We're now nearing the submission of our latest business plans to NHSBT. If approved, these will mark an important milestone, giving us the green light to move forward with our next steps. Our current aspiration is to implement the Planned Arrival Window in the summer of 2026, although there are still several key dependencies that will shape the path ahead and could affect that time frame. We are working hard to align those factors so we can confirm a date with confidence.

Hub Operations and Digital Discovery

BY
JULIE WHITNEY &
DONNA HARKESS

→ Hub operations

Shadow update - We are continuing to Shadow PAW using real time activity and modelling all donors as if they are within a PAW. Our May sessions we will be including RPOCS and will be asking them a couple of key questions.

- What time would you ideally need organs that you have accepted to arrive at your transplant centre?
- Are there any anticipated issues within your trust if organs were to arrive during daytime hours on that specific date?
- Would you require any direct or wet cross match material?

We will also include our transport provider in these sessions to gain input into the following areas.

- Based on current activity levels, would there be sufficient drivers available to manage all proposed movements within the modelled PAW timings?
- Would there be enough aircraft available to support the anticipated movements?
- Are there any changes or adjustments you would recommend to the current logistics plans to better support the proposed timings?

Further sessions in the following months will add in others key roles to the Shadow sessions such as SNODS and Hub Ops. This will be vital in helping us to identify any risks or issues associated with this model.

→ Digital Discovery

The digital discovery closed on the 1st April 2025 and we are currently refining the requirements to align with the user needs identified in our research. It is agreed that we will build a new Offering Management system for Hub Operations (OrganPath) and we will enhance the current Transplant Centre platform (TransplantPath) to allow digital acceptance and decline. This is a very exciting project that will support the implementation of the Planned Arrival Window and beyond.

Support Services

BY
CLARE DENISON &
MARK ROBERTS

→ Laboratory Services

The support services workstream, with laboratory services, analysed historical data to assess the impact of the new organ offering/allocation process on H&I lab workload.

Modelling indicates a major shift toward daytime activity:

- Labs performing virtual crossmatching at organ offer/allocation will move this to daytime.
- Labs conducting wet crossmatching pre-retrieval will shift to daytime due to earlier donor sample requests, depending on distance between donor and H&I lab.
- Wet crossmatching at organ arrival will also move to daytime, as most organs will now arrive early morning to support daytime implantation.

Donor characterisation samples for both tissue typing and virology testing will continue to be sent to commissioned laboratories to enable donor registration following consent / authorisation and therefore a 24/7 service is required, as it is now. There is more work required to fully understand the significance of the changes as a result of PAW, and we will await modelling data from the shadow work described on page 3 and involve colleagues in laboratory services when this is available.

→ Transport

Working with stakeholders the Support Services Workstream have undertaken initial modelling work and a risk analysis to determine the impact of PAW on transport. The Workstream produced a set of recommendations including

- A clinical role in the OTDT Hub Ops to identify and mitigate logistical challenges at an early stage
- Fixed daily transport meetings to identify resources and coordinate logistics
- Better access to live transport data including aircraft and airport availability to help operational decision making

We will continue to refine the modelling through Shadow PAW using real time activity, working closely with our transport provider to ensure there is effective allocation of transport resources.

NORS service model & Commissioning

BY
SARAH BEALE &
EMMA BILLINGHAM

→ NORS Service Model

The NORS service model workstream's recommendations for the optimal arrival window for NORS teams of 20:00 -03:00 is complete and accepted by the SCORE programme board. The recommendation of NORS team capacity was also accepted, that being; 8 abdominal teams and 3 cardiothoracic teams. There was a recommendation for 2 DCD heart teams however no additional funding is available at this time.

The 2024 modelling, like in 2023, showed similar and reassuring results. In 2024, there were 1,584 NORS attendances (1,758 in 2023). Of the 264 registered donors, 74% (196) could be accommodated at the Hub between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, similar to 76% (203 of 267) in 2023. Overall, 98% of donors (1,558 out of 1,584) could be scheduled within the planned arrival window—just like in 2023 (98%, or 1,726 out of 1,738). Only 2% (26 donors) would need to wait until the next day, the same percentage as in 2023 (32 donors).

The final component for the workstream to consider is the alignment of NORS teams. This is determining how NORS teams will be allocated under the Planned Arrival Window. We anticipate this piece of work will conclude in the Autumn when we will have the outcomes of the current shadow modelling described on page 3.

→ Commissioning

- Draft operational KPIs have been socialised with the Retrieval Advisory Group on 11 May.
- Following the recent funding settlement for NRP and DCD hearts, further meetings of the Commissioning Workstream are being arranged to look at what is required to build these retrievals into the NORS contracts, including funding and KPIs.
- A meeting is being arranged to finalise the organ quality KPIs, and these will be socialised with the NORS Clinical Leads
- The Commissioning Workstream will also finalise the processes for validation and monitoring of KPIs.

Donation Workstream & NORS Workforce

BY

JOHN STIRLING &
CECELIA MCINTYRE

→ Donation

- The Advanced Multi-Organ Screening (AMOS) tool has now been live for 6 months and will be evaluated in the coming weeks.
- The DCD suitability assessment went live in May and will be reviewed monthly as part of usual performance discussion/KPIs
- Becky Clarke (Regional Head of Nursing - Midlands & South Central) has committed to undertaking awareness sessions with the coroner/PF community, so they understand SCORE and the importance of the new timelines. This will help ensure that lack of objection can be obtained before donors are registered with hub and not delay offering in the planned offering window.
- From late June Organ Donation Teams in Scotland, Northern, Yorkshire and London will begin to evaluate what impacts, if any, the PAW will have on staff allocation and SN rotas. This is aligned with the shadow work in Hub, as described on page 3. We aim to have this evaluation out to all regional teams over the summer months.
- The regional collaboratives are being held across Spring 2025, with SCORE presentations provided to attendees with the expectation that SNs and CLODs begin to socialise the significance of PAW in their local hospitals.

→ NORS Workforce

In September 2024 the recommendation to establish a Local NORS Collaborative Forum was shared with all 16 NORS organisations. The aim of this forum is to provide a platform for discussion with the relevant individuals involved in and responsible for the NORS service. We appreciate a period of transition is needed to allow Trusts and Health boards to establish this forum. Early indications are this is happening, and in fact welcomed by NORS teams members.

This forum will have an internal focused spotlight on the health and wellbeing of that team and the ability to recognise the support needed to provide a robust sustainable service, fit for the future. Feedback will be received at the 6monthly clinical review meeting each NORS teams has. The expectation is that by the second clinical review meeting of 2025 teams will be providing an update with outcomes.

Going forward there will be a yearly update on progress provided to RAG.

Communications and Engagement

BY
PHIL WALTON

→ Engagement Activities

Since the beginning of 2024, we have actively engaged with colleagues across all areas of the donation, retrieval, and transplantation pathway to build a shared understanding of the significance and impact of the Planned Arrival Window. This has been a valuable opportunity to connect with passionate professionals across the UK, listen to their insights, and learn how we can refine the proposed model to maximise opportunities for donation and transplantation.

To date, we have met with and presented to:

- All Organ Donation Services Teams,
- All Cardiothoracic Transplant Centres,
- All Liver Transplant Centres,
- All Pancreas Transplant Centres,
- All NORS teams
- Approximately half of the Renal Networks, with the remaining taking place across the summer.

At the end of each engagement session, we presented 2 asks:

1. Develop local change plans
2. Understand what readiness for change looks like for you and your team / unit / centre.

→ Ongoing Engagement

We anticipate that, over the summer and into the autumn, the focus of SCORE will shift toward developing NHSBT's implementation plans. As these plans take shape, we are committed to communicating and engaging widely to ensure alignment across all stakeholders.

Our current projection for go-live with the Planned Arrival Window is the summer of 2026.

Useful Resources



ORGAN DONATION SCORE PRESENTATION

- This presentation is aimed at anyone working in organ donation e.g. ICU colleagues, theatre staff, CLODs, SNODs, Donation committees.
- Weblink: [Organ Donation SCORE presentation](#)



TRANSPLANT CENTRE SCORE PRESENTATION

- This presentation is aimed at anyone working in transplantation e.g. Recipient Co-ordinators, Transplanters, Transplant Centre managers
- Weblink: [Transplant Centre SCORE presentation](#)
- Powerpoint to access [centre specific data](#)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- During our engagement sessions we have captured all the frequently asked questions we've heard and developed this document as a point of reference.
- Weblink: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

