NHS
Blood and Transplant

The Update for 24 June 2025

Register your interest in hosting blood donation sessions
We appreciate your support

If you are interested in providing an area in your hospital to use for a blood donation session, and it meets the minimum requirements, please let us know so we can then organise for an assessment to be completed by an NHSBT-trained venue assessor.

The assessor will check your venue complies the relevant legal standards, including Blood Safety and Quality Regulations (BSQR), Manual Handling Regulations, that it is safe, accessible for staff, donors, and visitors, and has space for setting up a session and unloading equipment safely.

The minimum venue requirements are:

- a room size of approximately 20m x 10m (200 sqm)
- ground floor access, or lift access if on an upper level (the lift must support a minimum load of 265kg)
- vehicle access: space to accommodate a 7.5-tonne lorry, requiring gateways at least 3.65m (12ft) wide and clearance for 3.35m (11ft) height
- corridors at least 105cm wide and doorways at least 75cm wide to allow safe movement of equipment cages
- room access: venues must be available for approximately 9 hours, typically between 9am to 6pm or 12pm to 9pm, to cover the full session set-up and close-down

If the venue meets the minimum requirements, please email venue.developmentteam@nhsbt.nhs.uk, including details of the venue and a contact. A member of our team will be in touch to discuss the next steps.

Currently we plan our blood donation programme around 20 weeks in advance. This ensures we make as many appointments available for donors as possible.

In the meantime, if you have colleagues who want to donate blood, the best way that they can do this is to visit one of our 27 donor centres across England, or one of our mobile teams who visit many communities. Please ask them to visit blood.co.uk to find their nearest location and book an appointment to donate.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Darren Bowen - Assistant Director, NHSBT Supply Chain

Update your LIMS before the end of July 2025 for a new component: apheresis platelets in platelet additive solution (PAS) and plasma

The components team have been working diligently to introduce the component of apheresis platelets suspended in a mix of platelet additive solution (PAS) and plasma into clinical practice. Significant work has gone into validating the component, aligning with regulatory guidance, and ensuring safety and efficacy.

The barcodes to update your LIMS are published on the component portfolio and prices webpage.

Apheresis platelets in PAS and plasma should not be confused with the existing component, apheresis platelets in additive solution, also known as washed platelets.

The Joint UK Blood Transfusion Services Professional Advisory Committee (JPAC) have accepted the specification for apheresis platelets in PAS and plasma for publication to the Guidelines for Blood Transfusion Services in the UK (Red book). This milestone means we can move to the next phases.

Operational validation phases 1 and 2

We plan to start operational validation at a single collection site, the Leeds donation centre, towards the end of this summer. Validation will start with an end-to-end test of the process. This will enable us to issue this component, with limited availability during the single site trial, to hospitals from September this year.

During the validation phases, both the current apheresis platelets (suspended in plasma only) and the new apheresis platelets component in PAS and plasma will be issued.

We will update you as the project develops and provide examples of labels for comparison purposes.

Please contact Rukhsana Hashmat in the first instance at rukhsana.hashmat@nhsbt.nhs.uk or your Customer Service Manager.

Information about PAS

The introduction of PAS for the storage of apheresis platelets represents an evidence-based step forward in transfusion safety and component standardisation. Traditionally, platelets have been suspended in 100% donor plasma; however, re-suspending platelets in a mixture PAS and plasma offers several clinical and operational benefits. The decreased plasma content lowers the risk of adverse transfusion reactions and reduces the potential for transmission of plasma-borne pathogens. PAS also supports more efficient plasma utilisation within the blood supply chain.

Clinical studies and international experience have shown that using PAS does not compromise the efficacy or safety of platelet transfusions. As such, PAS platelets are increasingly being adopted as standard practice in many countries.

Dr Samah Alimam and the project team

The Update is produced by Hospital Customer Service on behalf of NHS Blood and Transplant
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