

To: Transfusion Laboratory Managers, Transfusion Practitioners, Consultant Haematologist with responsibility for Blood Transfusion, England EPRR

19 September 2025

Stock Position – O D negative red cells – remain at pre-Amber alert

Dear Colleague,

NHSBT stock of O D negative red cells is lower than we require and is vulnerable to changes in supply and demand. We are not escalating the stock alert position at this point but do ask for your support. NBTC and NHSBT are asking all hospitals to take action now to avoid impact on supply to orders.

Please take the following action:

- 1) Use appropriate substitutions and use O D positive if safe to do so
- 2) Use O D positive red cells for males, and females over 50, in emergencies where their blood group is unknown.
- 3) Please request R0 if you require this. This will give us a full understanding of demand
- 4) Refer to [NBTC Pre-Amber guidance](#) and continue to implement [Patient Blood Management](#) recommendations including:
 - a) Use of tranexamic acid prior to major surgery
 - b) Appropriate treatment of iron deficiency anaemia with oral or intravenous iron
 - c) Appropriate treatment of vitamin B12/folate deficiencies
 - d) Single unit red cell transfusions if not actively bleeding or on a transfusion programme
 - e) Use a restrictive red cell transfusion threshold, haemoglobin of 70 g/L unless patient is bleeding, has acute coronary syndrome, or is on a chronic transfusion programme

Please can we stress that at this stage we are not asking you to invoke your emergency plans.

We are sorry for the inconvenience this may cause and thank you for helping us to resolve this issue.

If you have any questions, please contact your NHSBT Customer Service Manager. Alternatively phone our Response Desk on 0208 201 3107, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday; we'll be pleased to help.

Please forward this letter to your consultant lead for transfusion and cascade to laboratory and clinical staff as appropriate.

Kind regards

Dr Lise Estcourt
Medical Director for Transfusion
NHS Blood and Transplant

Professor Cheng-Hock Toh
Chair
National Blood Transfusion Committee

