

To: Transfusion Laboratory Managers, Transfusion Practitioners, Chair of HTC, Chair of RTC, Consultant Haematologist with responsibility for Blood Transfusion, England EPRR, Chief Nurses

05 November 2025

Stock Update - B D negative and O D negative red cells

Dear Colleague,

We would like to thank you for your support in accepting O D negative red cells for B R₀ orders. From mid-day on **6 November** NHSBT will return to normal substitution practice to help balance stock across O and B D negative.

With the continuing fragility of both O D negative and B D negative red cells we need to take action across these groups to maintain supply. We are not escalating the stock alert position at this point but do ask for your support. NHSBT and NBTC are asking all hospitals to take action now to avoid impact on NHSBT's ability to supply to orders. There is a risk that we may have to move into Amber Alert unless we successfully work together to stabilise our stocks.

Action required

- Review and reduce your stock holding if safe to do so
- Use appropriate substitutions and use O D positive if safe to do so
- Use O D positive red cells for males, and females over 50, in emergencies where their blood group is unknown.
- Please request R₀ if you require this. This will give us a full understanding of demand.
- Please preserve R₀ blood for R₀ patients. NHSBT can help support setting up stock sharing with other Trusts.
- Refer to [NBTC Pre-Amber guidance](#) and continue to implement [Patient Blood Management](#) recommendations including:
 - Use of tranexamic acid prior to major surgery
 - Appropriate treatment of iron deficiency anaemia with oral or intravenous iron
 - Appropriate treatment of vitamin B12/folate deficiencies
 - Single unit red cell transfusions if not actively bleeding or on a transfusion programme
 - 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 maintain all PBM and stock management best practice alongside the actions required in the [Stock Shortage Plan](#).

We continue to deliver an extensive media campaign and working hard to bring in more O and B D negative donors.

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 – Transfusion
NHS Blood and Transplant

Prof. Cheng-Hock Toh
Chair
National Blood Transfusion Committee

