

# 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 September 2024 – 28 February 2025, data as at 26 March 2025. 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 104 blue light journeys, with 1 journey carrying kidney and pancreas, and 1 journey carrying liver and kidney. 52 (50%) of the journeys involved livers, and 9 (9%) involved living kidneys. The 28 heart journeys corresponded to 24 donors, 10 were DCD donors. **Table 2** shows the centre requesting the blue light use.
- 5 For the 104 blue light journeys, there were in total 392 activations, corresponding to a mean of 3.8 activations per journey. The median duration of blue lights use was 20.2 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 07:00 and 19:00 with Wednesday being the most common day.

**Table 1 Material being transported using blue lights, 1 September 2024 – 28 February 2025**

<b>Material</b>	<b>N</b>
NORS team*	34
Liver	52
Pancreas	2
Kidney	13
Small bowel	0
Heart	28
Lung	11
Bloods	0
Equipment	0
<b>Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>104**</b>

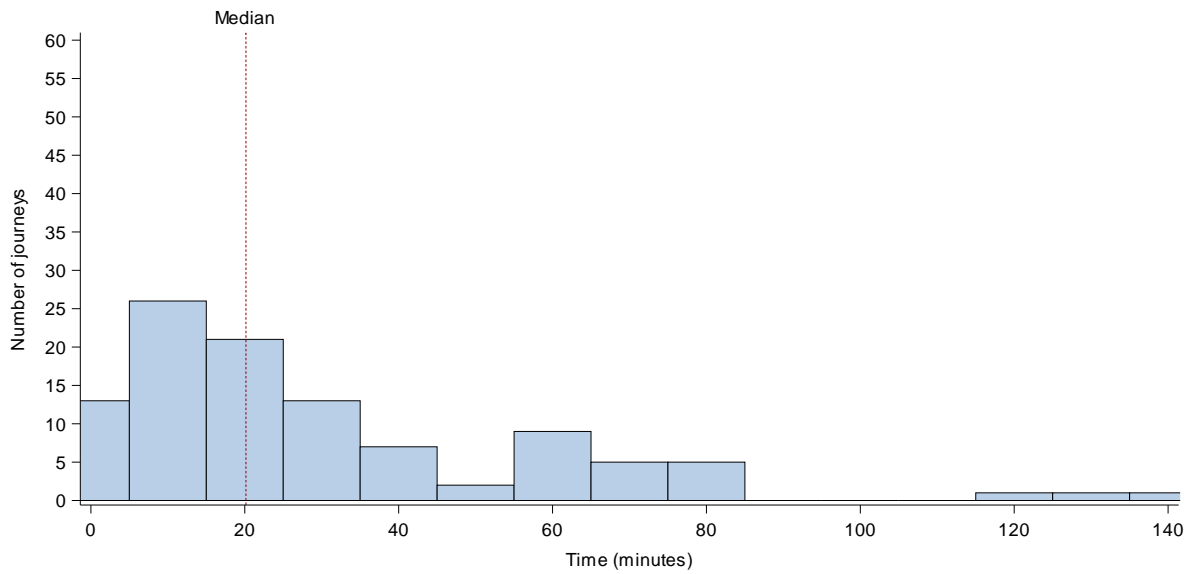
\* Note all NORS team activations involved the transport of an organ

\*\* Includes 2 journeys (1 kidney and pancreas, 1 liver and kidney), which are all counted in each individual count

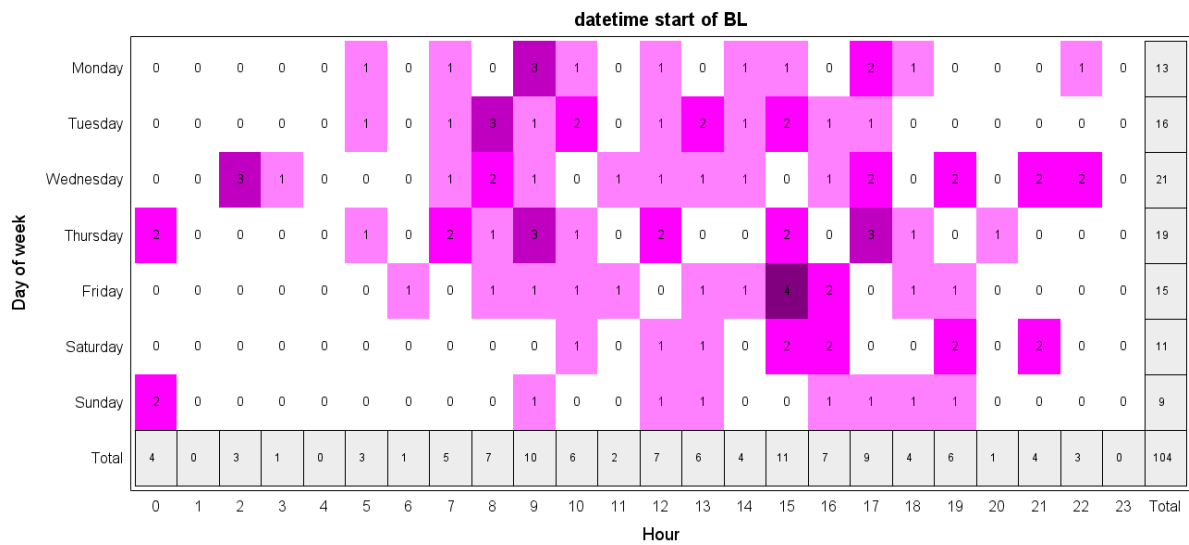
**Table 2 Centre requesting use of blue lights, 1 September 2024 – 28 February 2025**

<b>Centre</b>	<b>N</b>
Kings College Hospital - London	19
St James University Hospital - Leeds	13
Freeman Hospital - Newcastle	11
Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Birmingham	11
Royal Papworth Hospital	8
Harefield Hospital	6
Wythenshawe Hospital - Manchester	6
St Georges Hospital - London	5
Guys Hospital - London	4
Royal Free Hospital - London	4
Royal Infirmary Of Edinburgh	4
Golden Jubilee National Hospital	3
Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children	3
Leeds General Infirmary	2
Addenbrookes Hospital - Cambridge	1
Austrian Team	1
Derriford Hospital	1
Royal London Hospital	1
St Vincent Hospital	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>

**Figure 1 Duration of blue light usage, 1 September 2024 – 28 February 2025**



**Figure 2 Heat map for day and time of blue light initial use, 1 September 2024 – 28 February 2025**



**Figure 3 Heat map for time of blue light initial use, 1 September 2024 – 28 February 2025**

