

The Update for May 2026

Request for RCI improvement review

We would appreciate your feedback by 30 June 2026

Following a recent Continuous Improvement review of the crossmatching process, Red Cell Immunohaematology (RCI) I found that the information on the RCI delivery note duplicates details already included on the crossmatch report.

To streamline our processes and reduce unnecessary paperwork, we are considering stopping the issue of the RCI delivery note. Pulse paperwork and the RCI crossmatch report would continue to be provided.

Before making any changes, we would appreciate your feedback on whether removing the delivery note would affect how you receipt crossmatched units in your lab.

Please share any comments with your Customer Services Manager by 30 June.

Vanessa Winfield - RCI Process Improvement Manager

Please check your LIMS will display our new code in the Electronic Despatch Note (EDN) by referring to the list of LIMS suppliers here

The new code is 'J' and stands for 'emergency free'. It is in field 23 of the EDN data files, which details the issue / delivery type.

The LIMS suppliers listed below have tested and confirmed this new code will display correctly in their LIMS. and will not cause any disruption or negative impact.

If your LIMS supplier is not listed below, please let us know (details provided below). We will send you test files which you then need to forward to your supplier as soon as possible, to allow time for testing before 15 June when the new code is introduced.

- Clinisys
- Haemonetics
- Sunquest
- Cirdan
- Oracle (formally Cerner)
- Meditech
- Intersystems
- Dedalus
- Magentus
- Technidata

- WellSky
- Waters
- Sussex Biologicals

Please contact either Craig or Ruth to request a test file: craig.wilkes@nhsbt.nhs.uk, 0752 529 9020; Ruth.Harper@nhsbt.nhs.uk 0738 501 0479.

Craig Wilkes - Lead Specialist Scientist, Customer Services

New neonatal platelet component to launch in June 2026

Following the launch of apheresis platelets in platelet additive solution (PAS) and plasma we are pleased to announce we are launching a neonatal version.

The exact launch date is to be confirmed but we need you to ensure you have the [component bar codes](#) in your LIMS system in readiness. Please advise the relevant clinical areas in your hospital about this new component.

We will start issuing the new neonatal component alongside the current component.

These new platelet packs will be suspended in an increased amount (40% in total) of PAS with a corresponding reduction in plasma content. This change will reduce both the risk of allergic reactions and also further reduce the already low risk of pathogen transmission.

Since January 2020 neonatal platelets have been suspended in 20% PAS and plasma. The addition of this small amount of PAS was made in 2020 to improve platelet quality. This change resulted in a 20% reduction in platelet dose by volume but no change in clinical practice was advised.

These platelet packs with 40% PAS have a 20% higher platelet dose by volume and are therefore similar to concentration to those packs prior to 2020.

Implication for neonatal transfusion practice

This change in component will bring the dose of neonatal platelets back to the level pre-2020. There is a small difference in the electrolyte composition of the pack (around 4.5% increase in sodium) but this has been discussed with neonatologists and is not considered to be clinically significant.

Therefore, no change in clinical practice in terms of transfusion volumes is advised, although you may wish to update your neonatal clinical teams regarding this change.

Our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) provides more information on the component.

If you have any queries, please discuss with your hospital transfusion team in the first instance. Alternatively, you can email anne.kelly2@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Dr Anne Kelly - NHSBT Consultant in Paediatric Transfusion and Components

The 2026 to 2027 pricing for components, transport and Diagnostic Services is not yet confirmed

The National Commissioning Group for Blood (NCG) has responsibility for confirming the contract and pricing for blood components and diagnostic services. The group is considering NHSBT's pricing proposal with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

Once the proposal has been finalised, the DHSC will communicate the outcome directly on behalf of the NCG.

Pricing has not yet been confirmed; however, we are expecting a price rise of 2.5%.

We are currently using 2025/26 pricing in the interim which will continue until the end of June. Full details have been sent to your Trust's finance director.

We apologise for the inconvenience this situation presents.

Chris Philips - Head of Hospital Customer Service

The missing evidence: anaemia, postpartum bleeding and maternal death'

WOMAN-2 study now published

The [study](#) presents the missing evidence around anaemia and postpartum bleeding, advocating for decisive action to cut the prevalence and severity of anaemia in women and girls to reduce maternal death. The study involved 15,000 women across Africa and South Asia.

Prof. Mike Murphy - Consultant Haematologist NHSBT and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Revised guidance for emergency preparedness in hospitals' transfusion teams in England is now available

The Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response (EPRR) guidance has been updated and is available on the National Blood Transfusion Committee's (NBTC) [recommendations webpage](#)

This guidance incorporates recent experiences from major and mass casualty events, and the lessons identified from COVID-19 pandemic, the Synnovis cyber attack in 2024 and the Department of Health and Social Care-led exercises on pandemic planning, power outage, and cyber attack.

The EPRR gap analysis tool has also been updated, and we advise hospitals to use the tool to review their business continuity documents.

Dr Fatts Chowdhury
Consultant Haematologist in Transfusion Medicine
Clinical Lead for Business Continuity
Chair NBTC Emergency Planning Working Group / Haematology & Trauma Group / UK Red Alert Plan Group

The Serious Hazards of Transfusion (SHOT) newsletter for May is now available

The highlights in this newsletter are:

- 2026 Annual SHOT Symposium registration information - spaces are still available
- NBTC emergency planning Mayday seminars
- new resources including the risks of lone working and practical guidance on human factors
- publications covering traceability, near misses, and the My Transfusion app

[Read the May newsletter](#)

[Sign up](#) to receive the newsletter every month.

The SHOT team

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

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