

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

23 June 2026

Stock Update – impact of extreme weather

Dear Colleague,

Our stocks of group O D negative and R₀ red cells are reducing and becoming less resilient. The extreme heat this week will affect our ability to collect blood. Donors will be affected by travel disruption and schools closing. Those who can attend face an increased risk of not being able to donate because extreme heat affects haemoglobin levels. The limited blood collection this week will have an impact on our ability to supply blood over the next few weeks. I am therefore asking for your support to protect blood stocks.

To support our ability to supply red cells that are appropriate for your patients, we need your help to take the following actions:

Action:

1. Accept substitutions offered to you where clinically appropriate.
2. Use O D positive red cells for males, and females over 50, in emergencies where their blood group is unknown.
3. Review your stock holding of O D negative red cells and reduce where possible.
4. Refer to [NBTC Pre-Amber guidance](#) and continue to implement [Patient Blood Management recommendations](#), including updated [NICE guidance on TXA](#)
5. Review your red cell usage for SCD patients on red cell exchanges. Are all the units ordered being used? Review number of units required for each procedure based on pre-transfusion HbS and haematocrit and ensure the correct number of units is requested.
6. Initiate depletion red cell exchange procedures for SCD patients, if haematocrit and blood volume allow and clinically safe to do so.
7. Order R₀ red cells 5 days in advance where possible; we move units to where they are needed.
8. Delete outstanding orders on OBOS if the order is no longer required. They can be used for other patients.
9. Order R₀ units for patients who require extended matching of red cells and need R₀ red cells so we have accurate demand data.

10. Where R_0 units for a patient are no longer required allocate units to another patient requiring R_0 units.
11. Separate R_0 units from general stock so they can easily be identified and used for another patient who requires R_0 units.

We are sorry for the inconvenience this may cause and thank you for helping us to resolve this issue. We will provide a further update when appropriate.

We continue to deliver an extensive media campaign to secure new and returning donors to help us build and stabilise stocks.

Please cascade to laboratory and clinical staff as appropriate.

Kind regards

Lise Estcourt
Medical Director for Transfusion
NHS Blood and Transplant

Prof. Cheng-Hock Toh
Chair of National Blood Transfusion
Committee

