

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

29 July 2026

Stock Update – O D negative and B D negative Red Cell stocks are vulnerable

Dear Colleague,

We are concerned about sufficiency of supply of group O D negative and B D negative red cells over the coming days and weeks. With high temperatures likely we expect to see an increase in donor deferrals and potential for increased demand from hospitals.

We continue to deliver an extensive media campaign to inspire more members of the public to donate – specifically focussing on Ro and O neg - and are working hard to contact and book appointments for existing donors to support the at risk blood groups.

NHSBT and NBTC are asking all hospitals to take action to avoid impact on NHSBT's ability to supply to orders for red cells.

Hospital Action to Support O D and B D Negative Red Cells

- 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 18 and over, and females over 50, in emergencies where their blood group is unknown
- Please request Ro if you require this. This will give us a full understanding of demand
- Preserve Ro blood for Ro patients who require extended phenotyped blood
- 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 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
National Blood Transfusion Committee

