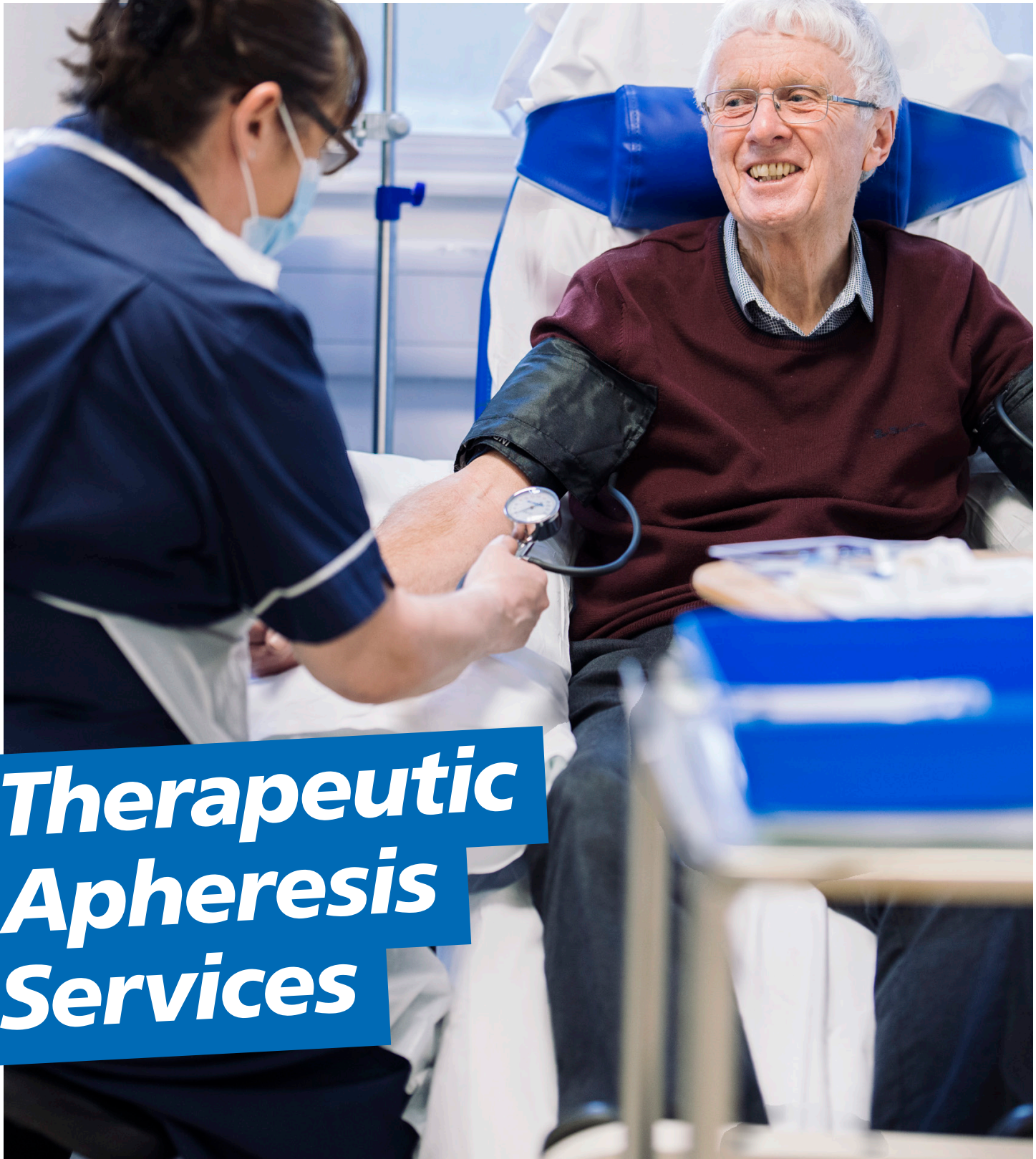


A healthcare professional, seen from the side, wearing a blue uniform and a light blue surgical mask, is taking a blood pressure reading from an elderly man. The man is seated in a blue and white chair, wearing a maroon sweater over a collared shirt and glasses. He is smiling at the camera. A blood pressure cuff is on his left arm, and the healthcare professional is holding a stethoscope. In the foreground, there is a blue box and some papers on a table.

Therapeutic Apheresis Services

2025-2026 Review

Therapeutic Apheresis Services

2025-2026 Review

Our values

Three small words,
one big difference.

Caring

Expert

Quality

Our mission, vision and strategic priorities

NHS Blood and Transplant's (NHSBT) mission is to save and improve lives. This inspires and motivates us every day.

Introduction to Therapeutic Apheresis Services

NHSBT Therapeutic Apheresis Services (TAS) provides a range of lifesaving and life enhancing procedures to adults and children across England and Wales, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Based within NHS Trusts in ten geographical regions, our medical and nursing teams use specialist equipment to exchange, remove or collect specific components from the blood.

Over the past year, we have supported more patients than ever before, delivering a record number of procedures. Our latest annual patient survey, we saw a 19% increase in responses compared to the previous year, with 96% of patients, donors, friends and visitors rating TAS 9 or 10 out of 10 for overall satisfaction.



Foreword

In 2025/26, we delivered over 13,600 apheresis procedures to over 2,600 patients and donors - more than ever before. We continue to deliver the Cell, Apheresis and Gene Therapy strategy, working towards our ambition to expand our apheresis services to meet patient demand, reduce health inequalities and save and improve even more lives.

TAS established seven new services for patients, including automated Red Cell Exchange services in the East of England, London and Bradford; a Plasma Exchange offering in the Southwest; and support for new Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP) across England.

By expanding into new regions, TAS is bringing high-quality, effective treatments closer to home, reducing disruption to our patients' lives. A further 14 new services are currently in active planning.

We have also supported the introduction of 15 new clinical trials, helping drive improved health outcomes and enhance quality of life for our patients.

This year has seen the opening of two new services in Plymouth and Cambridge where we are working in collaboration with local trusts and commissioning bodies to ensure that local patient communities have access to optimal care at the time and place they require it.

TAS has also expanded its treatment capacity by introducing an additional treatment bed space in Oxford. In addition, a new unit in Bristol is due to open soon, providing capacity for a further five treatment bed spaces.

In order to manage our ever expanding workload and diversification of our portfolio TAS has organised itself into dedicated working groups. These stakeholder groups - comprising medical, nursing and support staff - have taken ownership of key workstreams, driving and delivering a wide range of improvements.

Reflecting on the past year, I am delighted to see the strong focus and progress in improving our patient and donor experiences, demonstrated by all of our colleagues and partners.

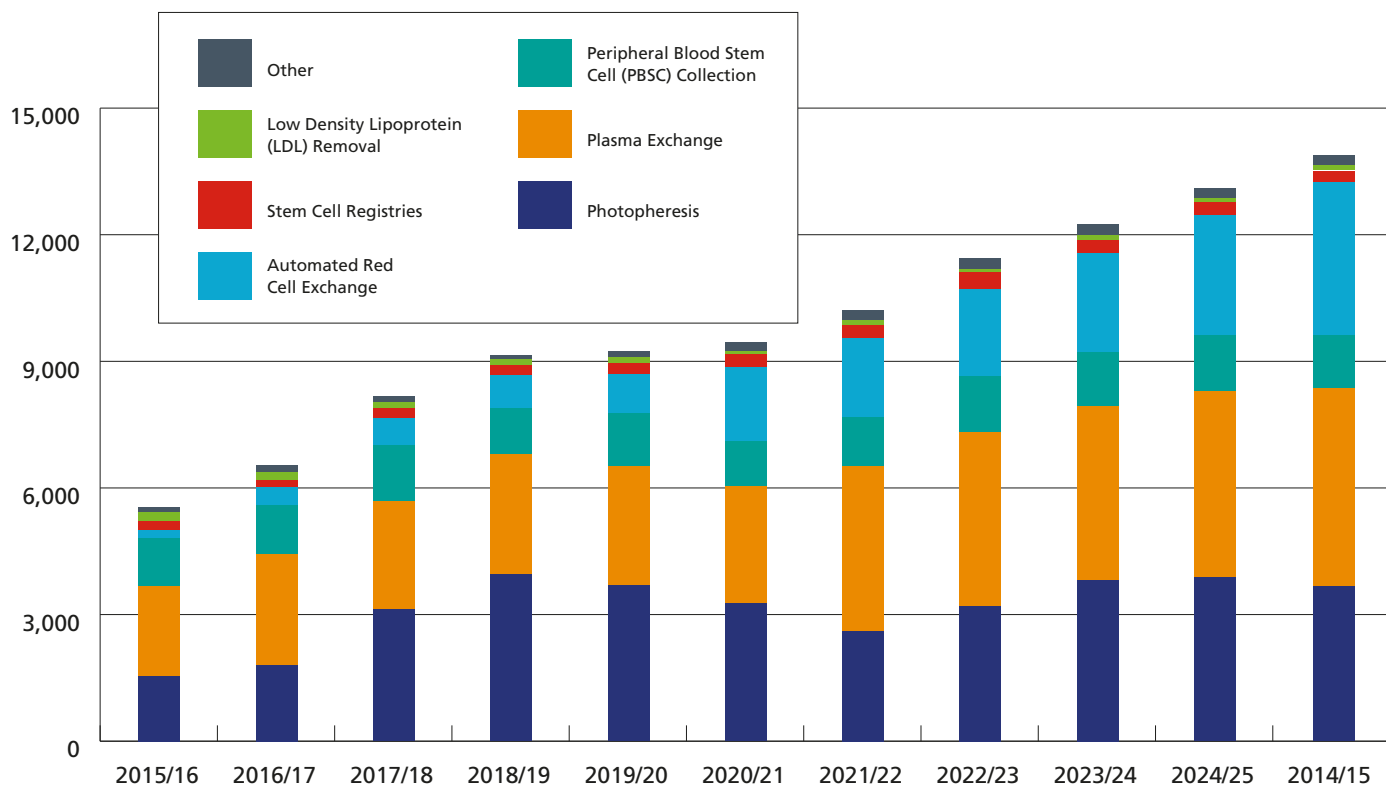


Teresa Baines

Head of Therapeutic Apheresis Services /
Deputy Chief Nurse Clinical Services

TAS activity summary

TAS completed 4.5% more procedures in 2025/26 than the previous year, delivering a total of 13,682 procedures, more than ever before. TAS supported 2,400 patients and 208 registry donors.



Caring



Patient/donor and family feedback

96% of patients, donors, family, friends, and visitors who completed our online survey scored TAS 9 or 10 for overall satisfaction. The number of responses received has increased by 19% compared to the previous year.

Patient/donor and family feedback provides us with valuable information about the patients', donors' and families' experience of our staff and the service and treatments that they receive. 100% of respondents found TAS staff to be friendly, caring and courteous.

In the past 12 months, TAS received 435 submissions from our patients, donors, family members, friends, and visitors, the overwhelming majority of which were compliments. We received:

- 331 compliments
- 101 pieces of feedback
- 3 complaints

All feedback and complaints received have been carefully considered and acted upon, to improve the experience of patients and donors.

Some examples of the feedback to our teams and staff:

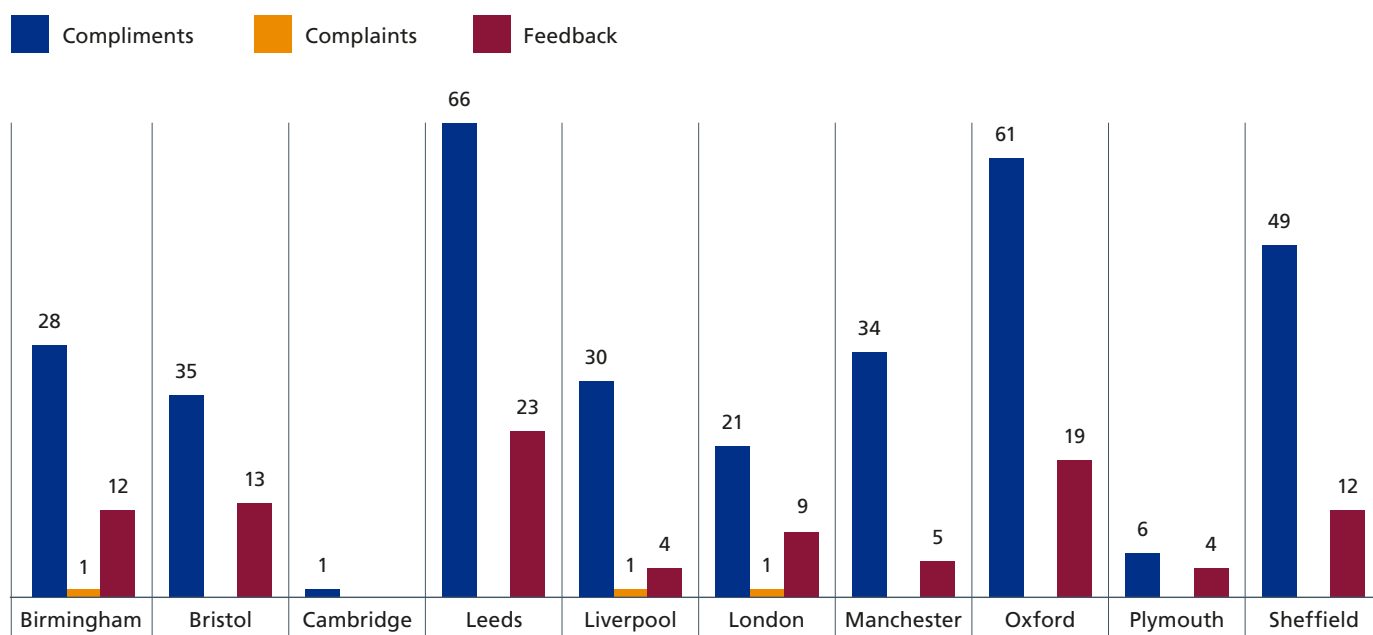
"I can't speak highly enough of the care and attention I received. Both highly professional but also very personable and approachable. They kept me informed at all times such that I felt totally at ease with the procedure and the care I was receiving."

"The nurses did their utmost to ensure my husband and I felt at ease. Their level of care, Understanding and support was superb! They really did make such a daunting experience much more pleasant than we had anticipated, and we can't thank them enough for making it a positive experience, not just for my husband but me too."

"All the nurses treated us with excellent care, kindness, friendliness and humour, providing information and explanation for everything they did. Their commitment to patient care is shown in everything they do."

"All members of the team who I saw were so friendly and helpful, but also obviously clearly experts at what they do! I felt in incredibly safe hands throughout and they made the experience very enjoyable."

Chart showing responses by unit January – December 2025



Saving and improving more lives

TAS continue to strive to save and improve patient's lives year after year. Highlights from the past year include:

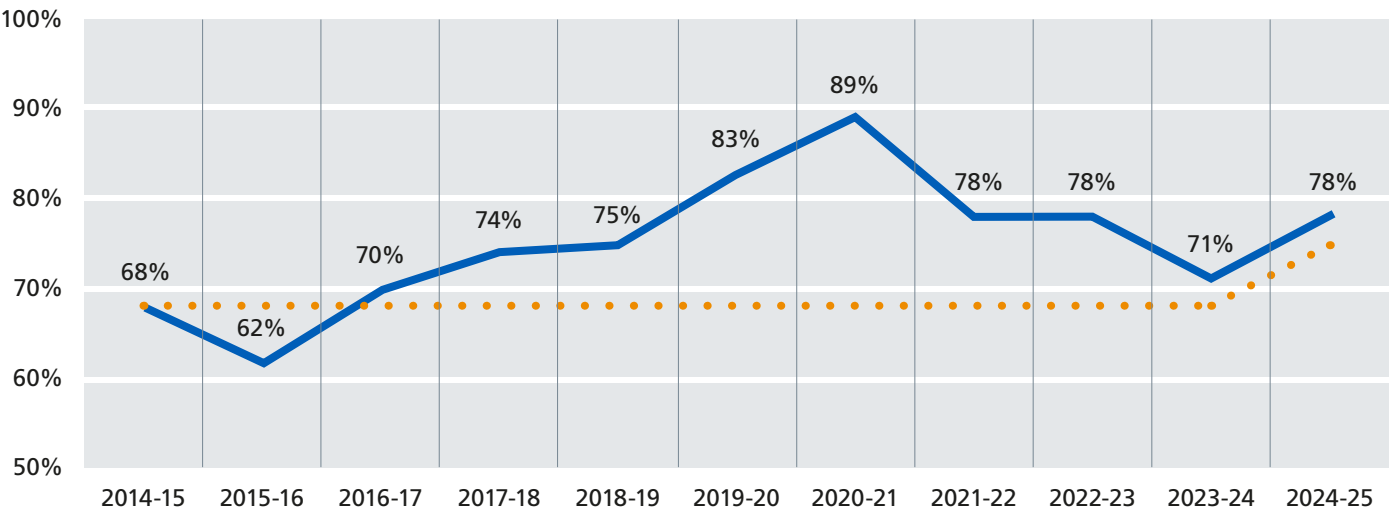
- The establishment of a new unit in Bristol, in collaboration with Genesis private hospital which is due to open to patients and donors in Autumn 2026. This investment in a new footprint in the Bristol area is expected to increase our apheresis capacity by 500 procedures per year.
- Progression of the Healthy Donor Apheresis programme, which will facilitate the collection of starting materials for research and product development processes.
- The full launch of the Plasma Exchange service in the Southwest, now embedding across five Trusts in the region. TAS has introduced a flexible, locally delivered service to improve access to vital treatments that both save and improve lives. The impact of this service was highlighted in national news in April, where TAS facilitated Plasma Exchange treatment for a new mother who began to lose her sight after giving birth, restoring up to 100% of her vision.
- [Cornish mum who went blind after giving birth has sight restored - BBC News](#)
- The establishment of a new Unit in Cambridge, expanding our services into the previously underserved East of England region. TAS specialist nurses are now providing Red Cell Exchange services at two NHS Trusts in the area, with a further two expected to join in the near future. This work supports our aim to reduce health inequalities, enabling patients who previously had to travel to London to access treatment closer to home.
- [Luton woman raises awareness of sickle cell after friend's death - BBC News](#)

User feedback

This section presents the findings of an annual online service user feedback opportunity held in June of 2025. Clinicians who had referred a patient to TAS between April 2024 and March 2025 were invited to participate. E-mail invitations were sent to 1021 referring clinicians requesting feedback on their experience of the TAS service. A total of 68 responses were recorded for 2024-25 reflecting an overall response rate of 6.6%, this is an increase on the number of responses to the 2023-24 survey which was completed by 58 referring clinicians.

TAS has seen an increase in Overall User Satisfaction in the 2024/25 survey as shown in Chart 1 below. The Overall Satisfaction result remains above the target of 75%. This result is the first time the overall satisfaction score has increased after a downwards trend for the previous 3 years. While the score has not returned to the peak of 89% in 2020-21, a 7% increase does demonstrate that the actions TAS have implemented following previous feedback rounds have made a positive difference.

Chart showing overall satisfaction (Q5) - 10 year trend



Expert

Education and training

This year, the Education team has expanded its programme offering by supporting the delivery of TAS training and specialist knowledge to the Intermediate Transfusion Medicine course, aimed at registrars and clinical scientists, as well as responding to bespoke requests to support knowledge – sharing with medical colleagues.

We have supported student nurse placements across many of our units and regularly contribute to the national NHSBT student nurse forum, providing hundreds of pre-registration nurses with insight to NHSBT and, in particular, the specialist work undertaken within our TAS units.

This work supports our strategic priority of reducing health inequalities by increasing awareness and understanding of the applications and benefits of apheresis procedures among health care professionals.

Advanced Practice

Advanced Practice within TAS continues to progress well. We have one qualified practitioner, with two more due to complete their studies in October 2026. A new trainee is now based in Leeds, and additional Advanced Practitioner has been recruited in Oxford starting in September. We have also been working closely with NHS England to ensure the appropriate governance is in place to support these roles, including the development of clear policies to guide practice. In addition, we now have a TAS-specific consultant available out of hours, replacing the previous wider NHSBT doctor on-call model and providing more specialist expertise in apheresis support out of hours.



The Advanced Practitioners (APs) are actively involved in all the working groups established to improve patient care through evidence-based clinical pathways. They are represented at internal national meetings and have been invited to deliver presentations at both national and international conferences.

In areas where the AP role is now embedded, the impact is increasingly evident, with clear indicators of strengthened multi disciplinary team (MDT) care pathways for patients.

To support planned growth in donor registry work, two trainee APs are currently working with the TAS consultants to undertake donor medicals, contributing to the expansion of this service.

APs play a key role in supporting the daily workload within TAS and work closely with medical colleagues by managing referrals, undertaking clinical assessments, and developing treatment plans. They also provide clinical support to nursing teams, including responding to clinical calls and assisting with unexpected bedside events or changes in a patient's condition.

We are very pleased with the positive impact the AP role has brought to patients, donors and colleagues, and we look forward to seeing it continue to develop and strengthen in the future.

Ultrasound guided cannulation

Our use of ultrasound guided cannulation (USGC) has progressed from strength to strength. 2025/26 is the first time we have a full set of data to show which venous access methods have been used for apheresis procedures, as more data is gathered each year TAS will be able to evidence the benefits of USGC to our patients, donors and wider NHS resources. In 2025/26 2280 apheresis procedures were completed with the aid of USGC, avoiding invasive and costly line insertion procedures.

"I have difficulty with vein location, they used the ultrasound on both days, found veins and cannulated with no pain, this resulted in two consecutive days of full treatments, thank you [...] for making it an enjoyable and painless experience".

Continuously improving

As the UK's largest apheresis provider, TAS works behind the scenes to deliver effectively against its current priorities while continuously improving quality and productivity in the short, medium and long term. Highlights from this year include:

The introduction of seven new services, alongside the development of a further 25

Support for the initiation of 15 clinical trials, contributing to the development of new therapies.

The planning and delivery of 26 customer and eight supplier review meetings, ensuring continued focus on service quality and stakeholder engagement.

The establishment of six internal working groups, each with a distinct focus area

The Therapeutics Working Group

is a multidisciplinary group aiming to improve and standardise practice across TAS for therapeutic procedures, focused on RCE and PEX.

The Cell Collection Working Group

is responsible for the ongoing compliance of regulatory and operational processes around cell collection to enable TAS to provide an efficient and quality cell collection service.

The Research Working Group

is a TAS and Cellular Molecular Therapies (CMT) a multidisciplinary group which reviews and manages all Trial activity across TAS. The groups aim is to also begin leading on and supporting internal research studies within therapeutic and cell collections.

The TAS Operational CI Working Group

is responsible for driving the implementation of a CI culture across all TAS teams nationally, ensuring that consistency and best practice is adopted. To ensure that benefits from CI activities are clearly quantified, tracked and maintained and ensure there is a drive for completion of projects.

The Extracorporeal Photopheresis (ECP) Working Group

is formed of clinical experts from a nursing and medical background to create clinical support and guidance to ensure a safe and effective service for our patients.

The Registry Working Group

drives continuous improvement in donor collection processes, delivering value across the donor experience while strengthening operational effectiveness for TAS and the registry.

These groups bring together subject matter experts from across TAS and other relevant NHSBT departments, each sponsored by a member of the TAS Senior Leadership Team. Their purpose is to identify areas for improvement, prioritise key projects, and drive delivery in an effective and efficient manner.

Quality

Quality and Governance

The TAS Quality and Governance Team supports our TAS Units in delivering safe and effective care to patients and donors by ensuring compliance with regulatory inspections, accreditations and re-accreditations, as well as strengthening our clinical audit programme. This programme utilises a digital platform to generate meaningful insights, which are shared both at local unit level and across TAS.

The team also supports incident investigation and management, leading on all major incidents and reviewing the effectiveness of corrective actions implemented in response to other reported incidents. In line with the national Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF), all patient and donor safety Incidents are harm graded to assess impact and determine Duty of Candour requirements.

In addition to maintaining business as usual activity, the Quality and Governance Team continues to drive forward new initiatives to enhance patient safety and the quality of care delivered. The team establishment has expanded over the past year to support these objectives.

Over the last year, TAS underwent eight regulatory inspections with no major findings. We are currently reviewing the new 9th edition JACIE standards and undertaking a gap analysis to identify any required changes in preparation for our first inspection against these standards.



TAS Connect

The TAS Connect team has continued to make strong progress in developing a fully digitalised system for managing referrals and patient/donor treatments across TAS. This transformation is a key step toward improving efficiency, traceability, and user experience for both clinical teams and partners.

We are now advancing toward a phased national rollout, with each release bringing expanded functionality.

Clear and timely communications will be shared with our NHS partners at every stage to ensure a smooth transition.

We are pleased to confirm that online referrals for plasma exchange are now live, marking a significant milestone in the programme. Additional treatment pathways are on track to be introduced later this year, further enhancing the system's capability and reach.

Goals for 2026/27

As always, the focus for TAS in 2026/27 will be to continue to improve and expand our services to meet patient demand and save and improve more lives than ever before. In 2026/27 we will:

- 1** Continue ensuring that our teams are ready to respond to increasing demand for apheresis services. Our staff are becoming more skilled year on year, supported by our Advanced Practitioners and Educators, who play a vital role in developing both existing and new colleagues. Our new site in Genesis Care Bristol, will provide an exceptional clinical environment, enabling us to increase our capacity for Healthy Donor work.
- 2** Continue working closely with our customers across acute trusts and with our aligned registries. We aim to improve our booking systems to enable a smoother, more efficient process and increase our ability to offer patients/donors their preferred first appointment dates.
- 3** Strengthen our commitment to undertaking TAS-led research. This has been something we have aspired to do for some time; however, paper-based systems have limited our ability to progress. As we move into a new digital way of working, we aim to encourage and support staff involvement in high-quality research that will benefit patients and services alike.
- 4** Continue collaborating with the Haemoglobinopathy Coordinating Networks to identify opportunities to provide apheresis services closer to patient's homes, particularly in geographically challenging areas. During the next year, we will also work closely with the regional panels to identify patients who could benefit from Plasma Exchange in areas where local access is currently limited or unavailable.
- 5** Continue to expand our capacity for apheresis through the expansion of existing TAS unit and investment into new TAS units and services.
- 6** Continue to champion inclusive leadership and embed a culture of fairness, equity and belonging across our services. We know that supported and valued staff deliver the highest standards of care, which remains our ultimate goal.

For more information on the TAS function please visit our webpages:
<https://hospital.blood.co.uk/TAS>