NHS
Blood and Transplant

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

06 November 2026

Stock Position – O and B D negative red cells – risk of move to Amber alert status

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your support since we alerted you to a risk of us needing to move to Amber alert for O D negative red cells. Unfortunately, our stock remains lower than we require and we are at risk of moving to an Amber Alert for both O and B D negative red cells.

While we are not escalating the stock alert position at this point, there is a risk that we may have to move to Amber. NHSBT and NBTC are asking all hospitals to take action now to avoid impact on NHSBT's ability to supply to orders.

Please can we stress that at this stage we are not asking you to invoke your emergency plans

Please take the following action:

1) Review and reduce your stock holding if safe to do so
2) Use appropriate substitutions and use O D positive if safe to do so
3) Use O D positive red cells for males, and females over 50, in emergencies where their blood group is unknown.
4) Please request Ro if you require this. This will give us a full understanding of demand.
5) Please preserve Ro blood for Ro patients. NHSBT can help support setting up stock sharing with other Trusts.
6) Refer to NBTC Pre-Amber guidance and continue to implement Patient Blood Management recommendations including:
   a) Use of tranexamic acid prior to major surgery
   b) Appropriate treatment of iron deficiency anaemia with oral or intravenous iron
   c) Appropriate treatment of vitamin B12/folate deficiencies
   d) Single unit red cell transfusions if not actively bleeding or on a transfusion programme
   e) 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

We are sorry for the inconvenience this may cause and thank you for helping us to resolve this issue.

If you have any questions, please contact your Customer Service Manager. Alternatively phone our Response Desk on 0208 201 3107, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday; we'll be pleased to help.

Please forward this letter to your consultant lead for transfusion and cascade to laboratory and clinical staff as appropriate.

Kind regards

Dr Lise Estcourt
Medical Director for Transfusion

NHS Blood and Transplant

Contact number: 0208 201 3107
hospital.blood.co.uk and nhsbt.nhs.uk

Give blood
blood.co.uk