

One Year On - RCI Assist *without* Remote Interpretation

A Referral Support Tool for Hospital Transfusion Laboratories

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Introduction



The Transfusion 2024 strategic plan outlined the urgent need to strengthen support for Hospital Transfusion Laboratories (HTL) to ensure safe provision of care for patients in need of transfusion¹



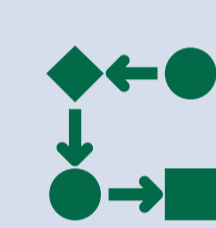
There was an action to undertake pilots of integrated transfusion services between NHSBT Red Cell Immunohaematology (RCI) and HTLs



A pilot of remote interpretation commenced across Path Links Pathology Network, supported by RCI Barnsley, and East and South East London Pathology Partnership, supported by RCI Tooting



The pilot was underpinned by the referral support tool, RCI Assist. This acts as a guide for HTL staff and aims to improve confidence by providing reassurance about investigations and blood provision

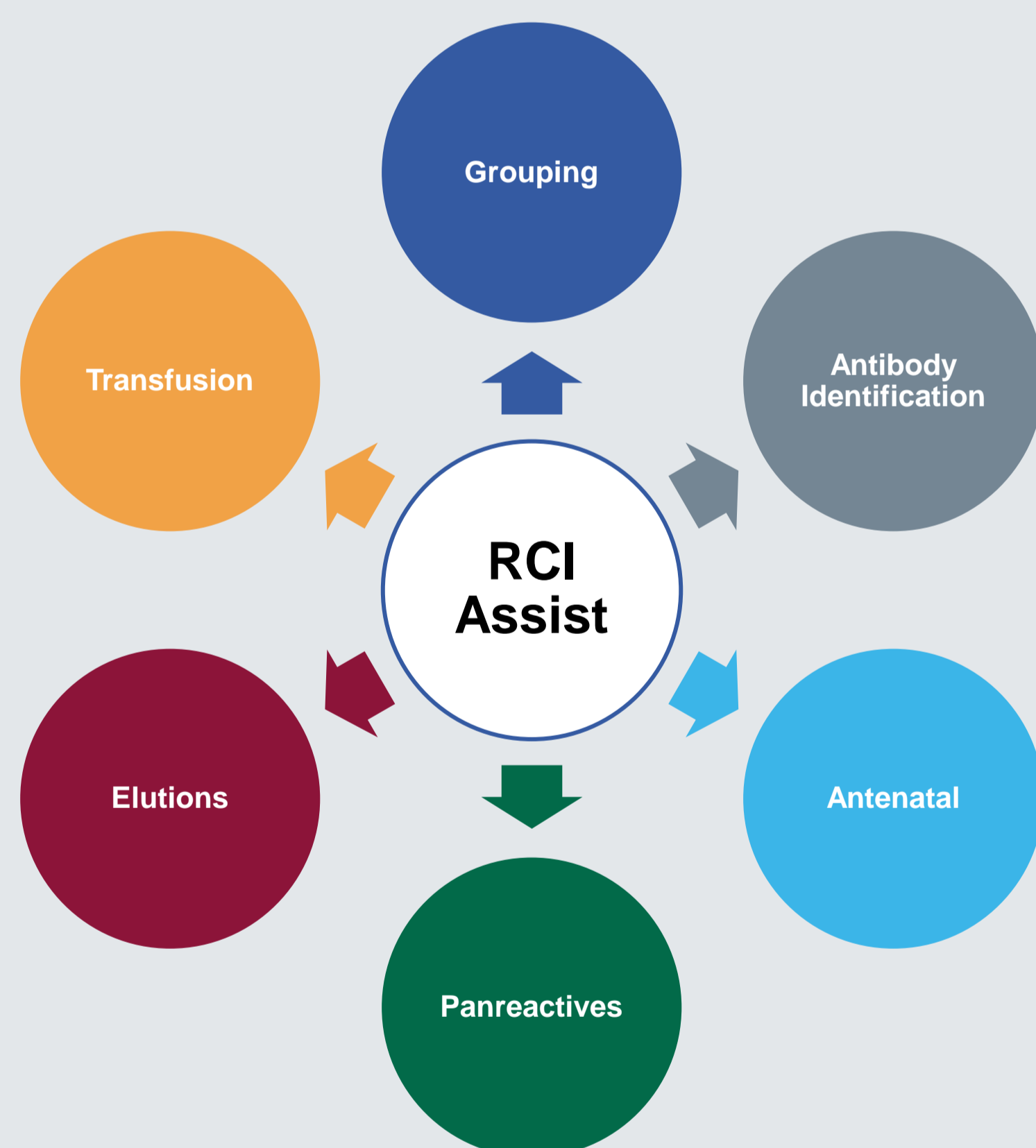


RCI Assist contains nineteen decision points and alongside supporting information, assists the user to resolve samples in-house or know when to refer to RCI



The pilot included four points at which a 'dry' referral could be made to RCI, where analyser results were emailed for remote interpretation without the need to send the traditional 'wet' sample

Methods



Quantitative data was captured to identify which RCI Assist decision point referrals were made. Data was analysed and compared to data collected in a retrospective review that also included a control group of non-pilot hospitals. Qualitative data was collected to assess if staff felt more confident and reassured about investigations.

Results

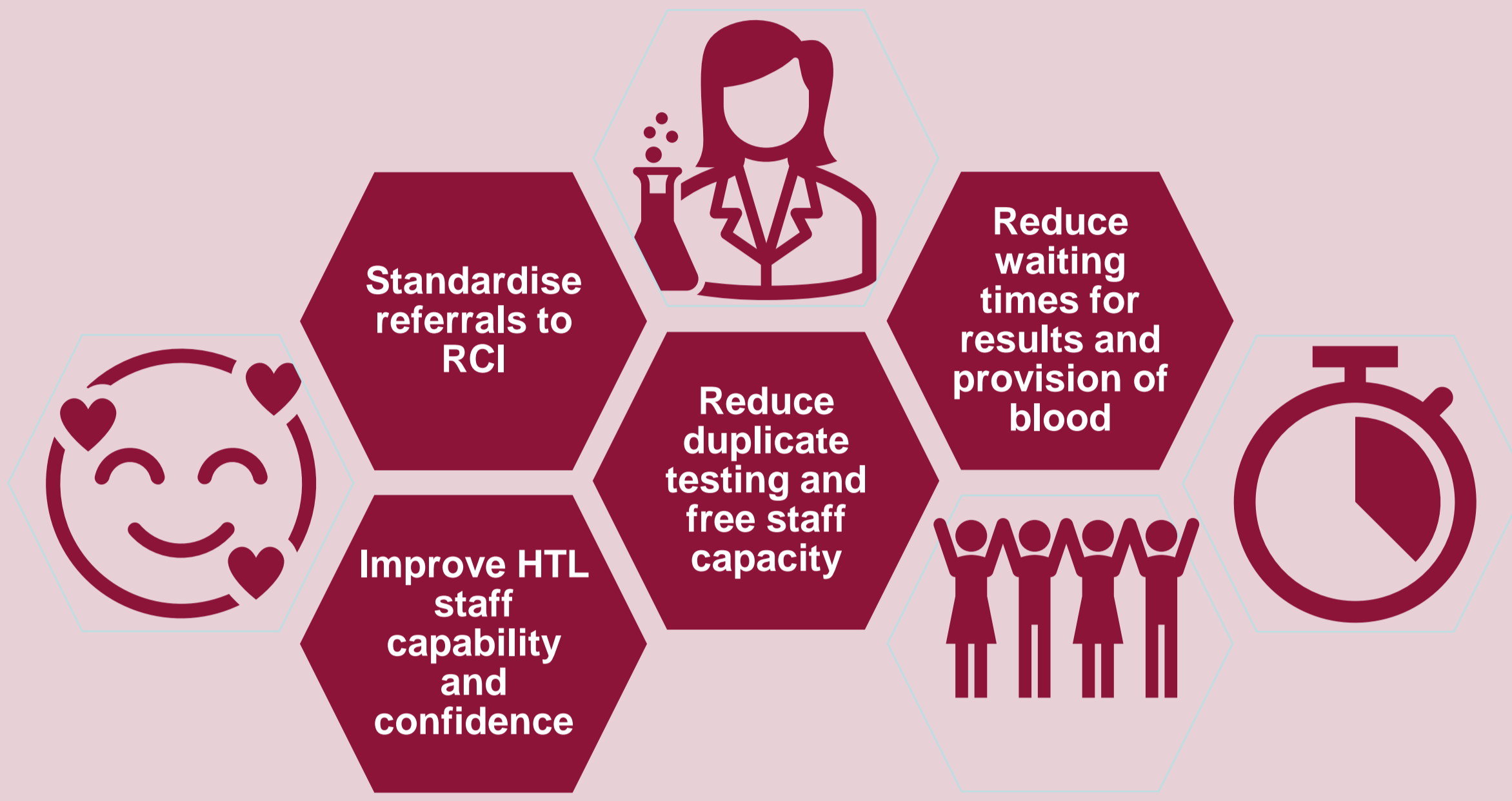
Of the referrals analysed during the pilot, 5% 'dry' referrals were received from the pilot sites, versus 14% expected. In the control group, 20% were observed, versus 16% expected. Qualitative data showed staff felt more confident when using RCI Assist.

Discussion

The aim of the pilot was to support hospitals resolve more referrals themselves by providing HTL staff reassurance in their investigations. This is reflected in the quantitative and qualitative data, negating the need for remote interpretation. 93% of HTL staff surveyed said they would use RCI Assist.

What next?

Digital development of RCI Assist with supporting educational modules is underway and expected to be rolled out to HTLs served by NHSBT in the coming year. Using RCI Assist has the potential to:



"RCI Assist provides a comfort blanket for those multi-disciplinary staff working in Blood Transfusion and gives them confidence when processing samples"

Kimberley Garnett, Blood Transfusion Manager, Path Links Pathology

"RCI assist is a potential game changer for the way in which valuable resources and expertise is shared, particularly relating to improving and supporting training and confidence levels"

Patricia Richards, Blood Transfusion Scientific Lead, East and South East London Pathology Partnership



How it works



Scan here then tap the picture on your screen to see RCI Assist works

Use the RCI Assist referral support tool to navigate your way through serological investigations:

YES NO To move through the pathways, select the yes or no options next to the question boxes

Elutions To jump straight to a section, select the required tab

i To get supporting information about a topic, click the information icon

Input result on LIMS Reach a decision point and either refer to RCI or result in-house



Acknowledgments

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