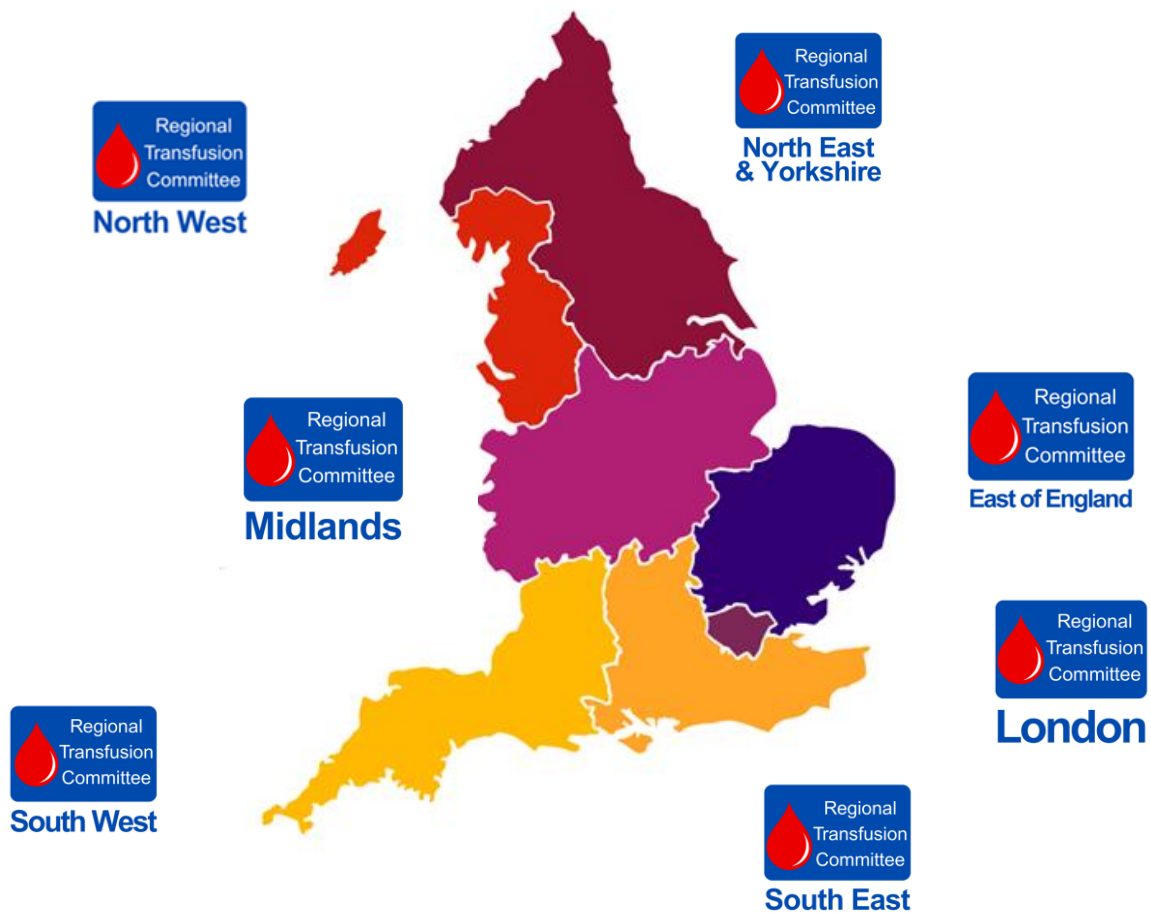


A Practical Guide and Resources for the Chair of the Hospital Transfusion Committee (HTC)



Guidance for New and Developing HTC Chairs

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Foreword

The HTC is a multi-disciplinary group of professionals providing the services of transfusion within a Trust. Your role as Chair is to provide clinical oversight to ensure that the services are safe and efficient within current legal and ethical guidelines.

This toolkit has been produced to assist you in your role as Hospital Transfusion Committee Chair. We hope it provides you with guidance to fulfil this important role and would welcome any feedback you may have on the document or how you can be further supported.

The NHSBT Patient Blood Management and Customer Service Teams welcome the opportunity to support your Hospital Transfusion Committees as required. Although they all have different roles, their overall aim is to work collaboratively with hospitals to ensure that blood components are safe, used appropriately and available when you need them.

The Regional Transfusion Committee is your support and escalation within your region. The function of the RTC is facilitated by the Regional Transfusion Team (RTT). There are also a number of sub groups of the RTC including Transfusion Laboratory Managers, Transfusion Practitioners, Clinicians Meetings and Education Working Groups. These groups may vary across the regions and meet regularly both in person and online and are actively involved in supporting the objectives of the RTC.

We would welcome your attendance at the RTC meetings. Dates and agendas are sent via email from the regions RTC administrator. The meetings provide an opportunity to keep up to date with transfusion news and issues both regionally and nationally, to share experiences, participate in active discussions and to network with colleagues from other hospitals.

Dr Lynda Menadue
Chair, East of England Regional Transfusion Committee
Consultant Anaesthetist
North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust

Transfusion Team Infrastructures in England

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the different transfusion committees and teams who work collaboratively to improve transfusion practice.

National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC)

The National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC) promotes good transfusion practice by providing information and advice to hospitals and blood services in England.

The work of the committee also includes:

- consulting with national groups in developing best practice guidelines
- reviewing the performance of the transfusion services provided by the NHS Blood and Transplant service
- identifying service development needs
- providing patient information and seeking patients' opinions
- giving advice to NHS England on transfusion practice
- providing information on education and training on blood transfusion

The seven Regional Transfusion Committees (RTCs) are responsible for implementing actions of the National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC). They oversee the activities of the local Hospital Transfusion Committees (HTCs) and provide a link between the HTCs and the NBTC.

Website Link [National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

Regional Transfusion Committee (RTC)

The RTCs are responsible for implementing actions of the NBTC in England and North Wales. They oversee the activities of the local HTCs and provide a link between the HTCs and NBTC.

The RTC is usually made up of representatives from:

- Consultant Haematologists, HTC Chairs, Transfusion Practitioners (TPs), and Transfusion Laboratory Managers (TLMs) from all the region's hospitals (NHS and private hospitals)
- The NHSBT Customer Service Team
- Patient Representative

Hospital Transfusion Committee (HTC)

Every Trust involved in blood transfusion should have a HTC as stated by the Department of Health in the Health Service Circular 2007/001: **Better Blood Transfusion - Safe and Appropriate Use of Blood**. The HTC should have the authority to take the necessary actions to improve transfusion practice.

A HTC should:

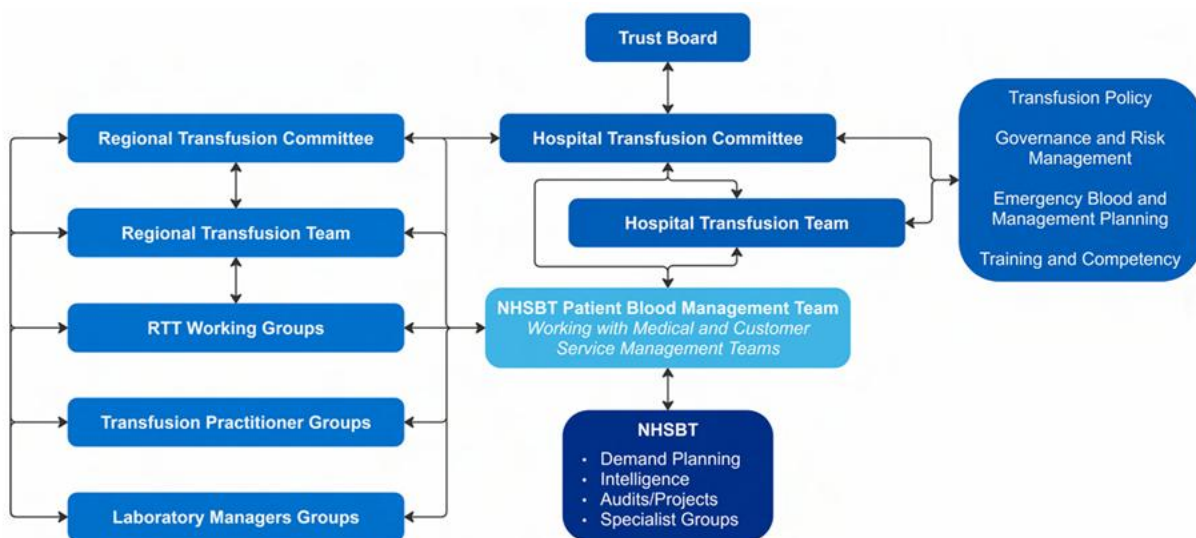
- Promote safe and appropriate blood transfusion practice through local protocols based on national guidelines
- Audit the practice of blood transfusion against the NHS Trust policy and national guidelines, focusing on critical points for patient safety and the appropriate use of blood
- Lead multi-professional audit of the use of blood within the NHS Trust, focusing on specialities where demand is high, including medical as well as surgical specialities, and the use of platelets, plasma, and other blood components as well as red cells
- Provide feedback on audit of transfusion practice and the use of blood to all NHS Trust staff involved in blood transfusion
- Regularly review and take appropriate action regarding data on blood stock management, wastage and blood utilisation provided by the Blood Stocks Management Scheme (BSMS) and other sources

- Develop and implement a strategy for the education and training for all clinical, laboratory and support staff involved in blood transfusion
- Promote patient education and information on blood transfusion including the risks of transfusion, blood avoidance strategies and the need to be correctly identified at all stages in the transfusion process
- Consult with local patient representative groups where appropriate
- Modify and improve blood transfusion protocols and clinical practice based on new guidance and evidence
- Be a focus for local contingency planning and management of blood shortages
- Report regularly to the RTC, and through them, to the NBTC
- Participate in the activities of the RTC
- Contribute to the development of clinical governance.

Although no recommendation is made from the DH regarding actual HTC membership, it is suggested that the committee membership should include:

- Chair
- Transfusion Laboratory Manager (TLM)
- Transfusion Practitioner (TP)
- Haematologist with responsibility for transfusion
- Senior nursing and midwifery representation
- Representatives from clinical high users of blood components
- Anaesthetist
- Member of risk management
- Representative from finance
- Representative from the Primary Care Trust or equivalent organisation

The committee should aim to meet at least 3 times per year. The HTC should report to senior management within the Trust, usually via the Risk Management Committee. A suggested organisational structure for HTC feedback is shown as follows:



Hospital Transfusion Team (HTT)

In accordance with the recommendations from the Health Service Circular 2007/001: **Better Blood Transfusion – Safe and Appropriate Use of Blood**, Trusts should establish a HTT for promoting good transfusion practice through the development of an effective local clinical infrastructure. The team should consist of the Lead Consultant for Transfusion (with sessions dedicated to blood transfusion), Transfusion Practitioner, Transfusion Laboratory Manager and possibly other members of the HTC. There should be identified clerical, technical, managerial and IT support, the team should also have access to audit and

training resources to promote and monitor safe and effective use of blood and alternatives. The HTT should aim to meet on a monthly basis.

The role of the HTT is to:

- Implement the HTC's objectives
- Promote and provide advice and support to clinical teams on the safe and appropriate use of blood
- Promote patient information and education on blood transfusion safety and use of alternatives
- Actively promote the implementation of Patient Blood Management
- Be a source for training all NHS Trust staff involved in the process of blood transfusion
- Produce an annual report including its achievements, action plan and resource requirements for consideration by senior management at Board level through the HTC and the Trust's clinical governance and risk management arrangements.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) Regional Team

A regional team is linked to every Trust and hospital in England and North Wales. Each team works with the local healthcare community to ensure that the service provided by NHSBT is of the highest possible standard and to support clinical colleagues in Trusts to promote PBM. The team works in partnership with the other UK Blood Services and inputs into many national groups such as the NBTC, SHOT, National Comparative Audit (NCA) and Blood Consultative Committee (BCC). The team contribute to the development and dissemination of evidence based transfusion guidelines and policies. A key objective for the regional team is to support the activities of the RTC.

Each team includes representatives from the Customer Services, Patient Blood Management and Patient Clinical teams.

Consultant Haematologist - The Consultant Haematologist is a member of the PBM Patient Clinical Team. The primary focus of this role is to provide clinical support and advice to hospitals. The Patient Clinical team provide 24 hour on call support across England and North Wales. Posts are often joint with a local large hospital Trust.

Customer Service Manager (CSM) - The CSM is a member of the Customer Services Team. The CSM has a scientific background and is the primary link between the blood centre and the hospital transfusion laboratory. They ensure that hospital transfusion laboratories obtain the best quality of service from NHSBT by handling complaints and escalating requests for service improvements and developments.

Patient Blood Management Practitioner (PBMP) - The role of the Patient Blood Management Team is to support and promote Patient Blood Management initiatives to optimise the care of patients who may need transfusion. By acting as a resource and by facilitating networking, each regional PBMP works with hospitals, HTCs, the RTC, and closely with Transfusion Practitioners providing specialist advice and support. The PBMP also works within the wider PBM Team producing resources, education, PBM projects, programmes of support and collaborates with wider NHS professionals to promote best practice in PBM. Please contact your regional PBM if you would like to discuss PBM initiatives within your hospital.

RTC Administrator – the role of the RTC Administrator is to support the regions RTC and working groups. They help to arrange meetings, take minutes and circulate these to the region. The RTC Administrator assists in organising regional education events and also education events as agreed by the NBTC education programme.

Blood Stocks Management Scheme (BSMS)

BSMS was established to understand and improve blood inventory management across the blood supply chain.

The VANESA data management system is used to collect and view real time data and charts combining data supplied by hospitals and blood services. Hospitals can use the scheme to monitor and audit their blood issues and wastage and benchmark against similar hospitals and specialities. The accuracy of the data is reliant upon input of data by hospitals.

BSMS supplies each hospital with a monthly component report, providing analysis and insight over the last 12 months. It also includes key benchmarking of stockholding and wastage metrics like Issuable Stock Index (ISI) and Wastage as a percentage of issue (WAPI). The scheme provides education and bespoke support to hospitals upon request - for further information please get in touch bsms@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Website Link <https://www.bloodstocks.co.uk/>

Emergency planning and business continuity

There exists the ever possible risk of reduced stocks and blood shortages. The NBTC sub group on contingency planning released an integrated plan listing actions to be taken by NHS Blood and Transplant and hospitals in times of shortages. Documents to support hospitals in contingency planning and emergency blood shortage planning can be found on the Hospitals and Science website <http://hospital.blood.co.uk/business-continuity/contingency-planning/>

Patient Blood Management (PBM)

Patient blood management is a patient-centred, systematic, evidence-based approach to improve patient outcomes by managing and preserving a patient's own blood, while promoting patient safety and empowerment¹. By focusing on the prevention of anaemia, the minimisation of blood loss, and patient-centred decision-making, it aims to prioritise the health of a patient's own blood while reducing unnecessary and inappropriate use of donor components, and improving clinical outcomes and enhance safety.

There's strong evidence and research showing that PBM leads to better patient outcomes.

In the UK PBM has evolved through several key milestones:

- 2012: PBM was launched as a collaborative initiative between the National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC) and NHSBT
- 2014: The NBTC produced national recommendations for hospital implementation
- 2015-2016: NICE published Guidance (NG24) and Quality Standards focusing on consent, anaemia treatment, and single-unit transfusion policies updated QS138 2026
- 2019: The Transfusion 2024 Symposium outlined a five-year strategy for clinical and laboratory practice. Building on the work from this programme, the Transfusion Transformation programme commenced in 2026
- Regular PBM Benchmarking surveys and now NCA QS138 and Quality Insights audits

PBM is now a well-established international initiative in best practice for transfusion medicine and is increasingly incorporated as routine standard of care for patients. It is applied to surgical, medical, obstetrics and paediatric patients in both the elective and emergency care setting.

In 2021 The World Health Organisation released The urgent need to implement patient blood management: policy brief, following this up in 2025 with guidance on implementing patient blood management to improve global blood health status recognising PBM as the gold standard of care.

4 core principles for PBM:

- **Anaemia Identification and Treatment**
- **Blood Conservation**
- **Coagulation Optimisation**
- **Decision making (patient-centred)**

PBM uses a range of strategies and techniques to protect the patient's own blood and help their body keep and restore its blood volume naturally.

These include identification and optimisation of anaemia, appropriate use of blood components and management of coagulation and bleeding, including the use of surgical techniques, cell salvage, and Tranexamic acid

Importantly, PBM supports patient choice and helps people make informed decisions. The patient should be fully informed about all options and alternatives for their treatment and given information in an understandable format to enable shared decision making.

Where possible we should consider all choices before proceeding to a blood transfusion. However, it's important to remember that in some cases, a blood transfusion is still the best treatment.

Healthcare providers and Hospital transfusion committees are encouraged to implement these strategies by establishing multidisciplinary teams, educating staff, and using benchmarking data to monitor compliance. Ultimately, this approach ensures that blood transfusions are reserved for essential cases, protecting both the individual patient's recovery and the wider blood supply.

Further information on PBM, PBM strategies and techniques and its implementation can be found within chapter 8 of Blood Essentials and on the Hospitals and Science website PBM pages

Patient Blood Management location of resources

- **Visit the NHSBT Hospitals & Science website PBM webpages** – The PBM team have produced a wide range of resources to support hospitals and Health care professionals implement PBM measures
- Access Education for Health care professionals including eLearning, education events and the Blood Assist and Blood component Apps
- Access Patient information leaflets to support informed decision making and consent
- Access Resources to support safe practice
- Access resources for Implementing patient blood management
- Access resources to support Appropriate use of blood components including single unit transfusion strategies
- Access resources to help Identify and manage anaemia
- Watch YouTube - Patient Blood Management England – Access videos and playlists supporting PBM

Patient Blood Management resources on the JPAC website

- Access the UK Cell Salvage action group resources
- Access Transfusion practice resources on Consent
- Access Transfusion 2024 information
- Access the Transfusion 2024 checklist for Hospitals

The Patient Blood Management Team

Patient Blood Management England is a team of specialist Nurses, Midwives, Doctors, Healthcare Scientists and Administrators, with teams based in each of the seven NHS England regions.

They support all aspects of blood management, helping hospitals optimise patients' own blood and promote best practice in anaemia, bleeding, coagulation, and alternatives to transfusion such as cell salvage.

Focused on patient safety and the appropriate use of donor blood, they provide specialist advice, education, audit, and research support to NHS Trusts and healthcare providers across England. Working closely with national organisations, blood services, universities, and healthcare partners, they promote a coordinated, patient-centred approach to improving care and blood management.

Watch - Who are we? Patient Blood Management England

If you have any queries on PBM or would like to discuss PBM initiatives within your organisation contact your regional Patient blood management practitioner or PBM.Team@nhsbt.nhs.uk

References

1. A Global Definition Shander A. et al. Anesth Analg 2022; 135(3): 476-488 [Anesthesia & Analgesia](#)

Guidance and publications

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2015) Guidelines for Blood Transfusion {NG24}. 2015 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng24>
[Recommendations for research](#)
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2016) Quality Standards for Blood Transfusion QS138.2016 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs138>
- The World Health Organisation (2025) [Guidance on implementing patient blood management to improve global blood health status](#)
- The World Health Organization (2021) [The urgent need to implement patient blood management: policy brief](#)

The National Institute for Health Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines

The National Institute for Health Care Excellence (NICE) produced Guidelines for Blood Transfusion in November 2015.	
There can be accessed at: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng24 In December 2016, NICE produced QS138 Quality Standards for blood transfusion which can be found at: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs138 .	The guideline includes recommendations on: • alternatives to transfusion for patients having surgery • thresholds, targets and doses for red blood cells, platelets, fresh frozen plasma, cryoprecipitate and prothrombin complex concentrate • patient safety • patient information

Infected Blood Inquiry

The infected blood inquiry is an independent public statutory Inquiry established to examine the circumstances in which men, women and children treated by national Health Services in the United Kingdom were given infected blood and infected blood products, in particular since 1970.	
Homepage Infected Blood Inquiry	IBI Terms of Reference

Audits

Hospital Quality Improvement

QS138 Quality Insights is a quality improvement tool for hospitals to self-assess compliance to elements of the NICE Blood Transfusion Quality Standard QS138. Users can choose the quality statement/s to measure at a schedule that fits with local priorities and workload. Quality statements can be audited up to four times per year. Users obtain real-time automated Hospital Reports that trend progress and benchmark against regional and national compliance. This output support HTCs to evidence practice, identify areas of strength and weakness, and consider interventions that support a local continuous improvement approach to implement Patient Blood Management. Regional Reports are also available where RTCs choose to run regional audit cycles to assess practice and inform work planning.

The use of QS138 Quality Insights aligns with the fully accepted recommendation 7a of the Infected Blood Inquiry that *Consideration be given to standardising and benchmarking transfusion performance between hospitals in order to deliver better patient blood management.*

Further information is available on the QS138 Quality Insights [webpage](#).

The National Comparative Audit of Blood Transfusion (NCABT) is a programme of clinical audits which looks at the use and administration of blood and blood components in NHS and independent hospitals in England. They also invite participation from the blood services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The objective of the programme is to provide evidence blood is being ordered and used appropriately, administered safely, to highlight where practice is deviating from guidelines to the possible detriment of patient care.

The programme has been in operation since 2003 and is funded entirely by NHS Blood and Transplant through the blood pricing mechanism, and is one of the largest independently funded audit programmes in the UK. No charge is made to UK hospitals participating in it.

Details of upcoming audits, ongoing audits and published reports can be found at [National Comparative Audit - Hospitals and Science - NHSBT](#)

Regional Meetings and Education

The NBTC promotes the education of all staff involved in transfusion across all the regions of England. Working in collaboration with NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), they provide education events (virtual and face to face), resources, and tools supporting the safe and appropriate use of blood components.

NBTC Rolling Programme

In Autumn 2023, the National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC) approved a proposal for Regional Transfusion Committees (RTC) to work together to produce a rolling programme of virtual education sessions accessible nationally. The programme runs from April to April and will see 7 education sessions delivered every year, involving each of the 7 Regional Transfusion Committees. Each RTC may also chose additional sessions to run in their region. A wide range of subject matters will be covered, with offerings for both clinical and laboratory personnel.

Blood Transfusion Education and Discussion Group (BTEDG)

The NHS Blood and Transplant Patient Blood Management team launched the Blood Transfusion Education and Discussion Group (BTEDG), formally known as the Biomedical Scientist Empowerment, Education and Discussion Group, in September 2020. The BTEDG is free to access for everybody and aims to address the need for an on-going programme of education and continuing professional development for healthcare professionals working in blood transfusion.

Meeting monthly, a subject matter expert is invited to lead on a pertinent topic, before opening the session for discussion between attendees and speaker. The curriculum considers key industry recommendations and is also informed by users, adapting in response to feedback provided by attendees. The group meets on the **last Wednesday of every month at 14:00-15:00.**

How are education sessions advertised?

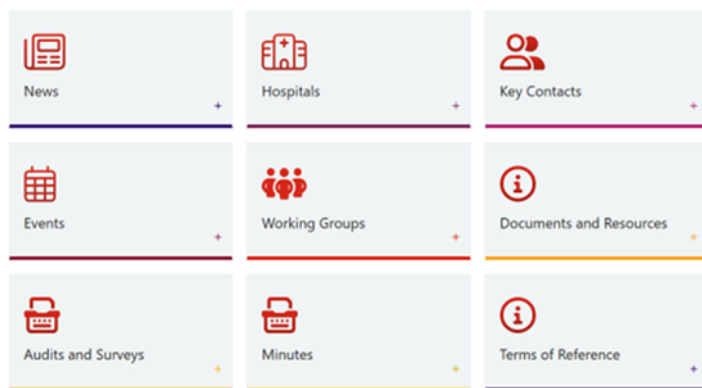
Education Sessions will be advertised via the RTC Administrators and can be found on the following website [Education | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

Regional Meetings

As HTC Chair you will be added to the circulation list for your region. The RTC Administrator will invite you to RTC meetings and regional education events. These will be held either virtually or face-to-face.

East of England

The East of England pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.



Website Link

[East of England | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)



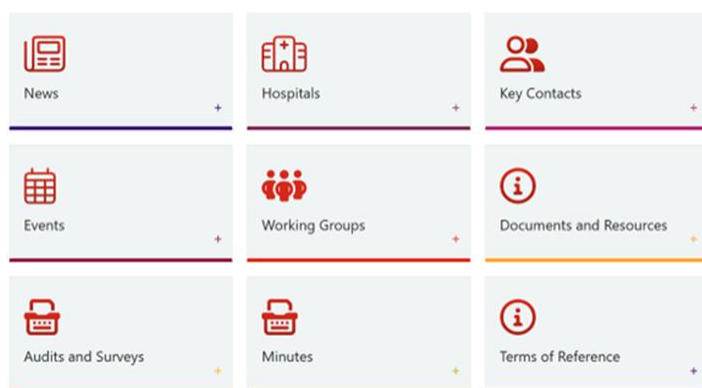
RTC Patient
Representative Docun



East of England RTC
Contingency Plan.pdf

London

The London pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.

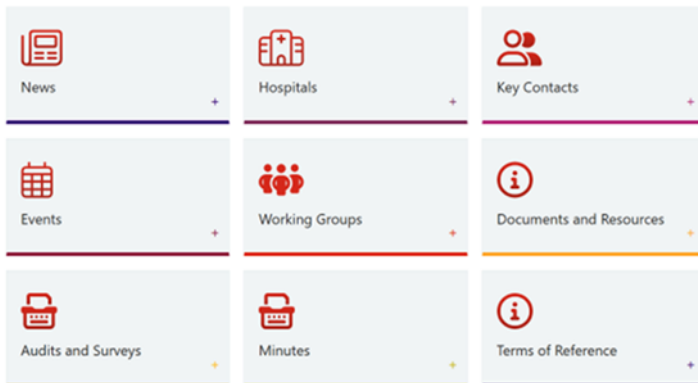


Website Link

[London | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

South East

The South East pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.

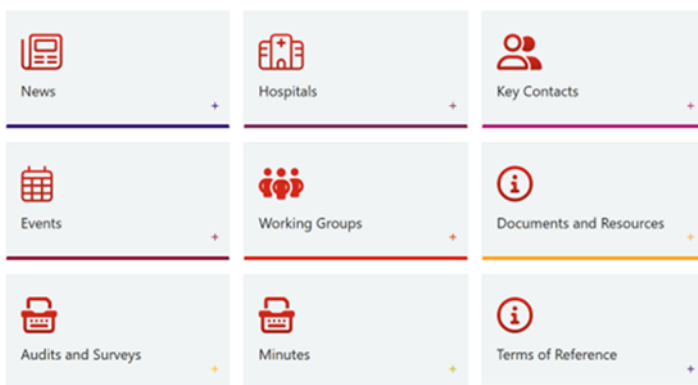


Website Link

[South East | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

South West

The South West pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.

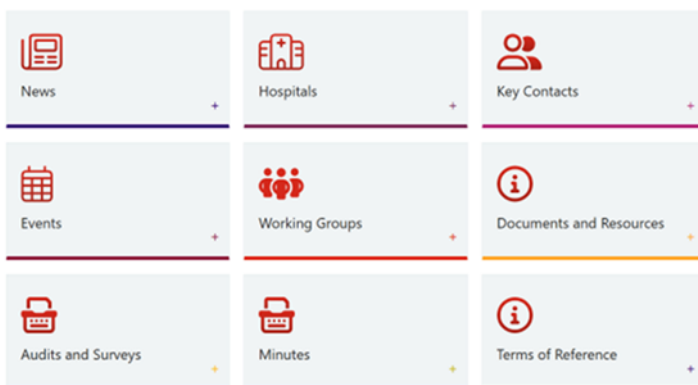


Website Link

[South West | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

Midlands

The Midlands pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.

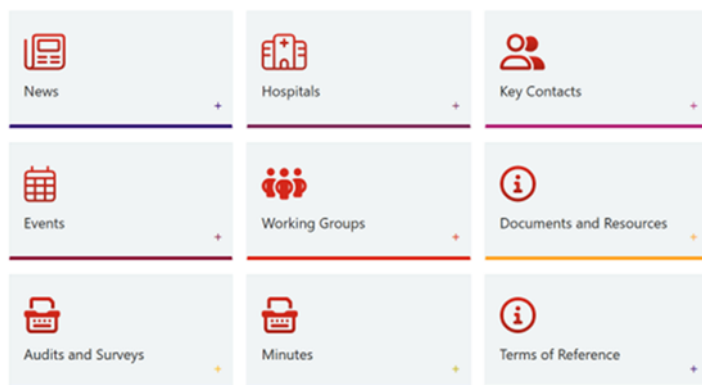


Website Link

[Midlands | National Blood Transfusion Committee](#)

North West

The North West pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.

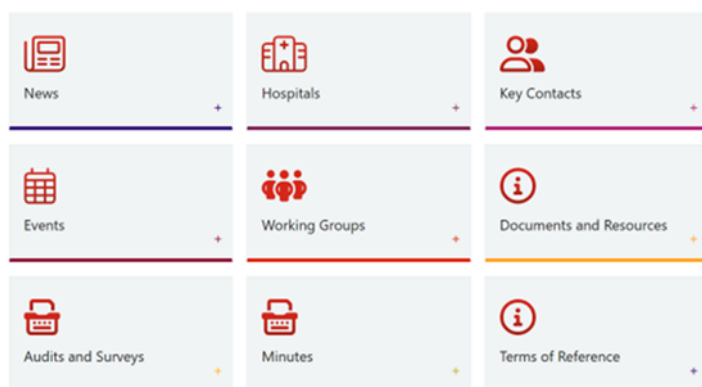


Website Link

North West | National
Blood Transfusion
Committee

North East & Yorkshire

The North East & Yorkshire pages on the National Blood Transfusion website can provide you with a host of beneficial information. Current key contacts and a list of hospitals can be found here. Details of working groups, audits and minutes will also be held here.



Website Link

North East and Yorkshire
| National Blood
Transfusion Committee

Useful Websites and Documents

Serious Hazards of Transfusion	Serious Hazards of Transfusion
British Society for Haematology	https://b-s-h.org.uk/
British Blood Transfusion Society	British Blood Transfusion Society - Home
Blood Essentials	Blood Essentials - Now available National Blood Transfusion Committee
The World Health organisation (2025)	Guidance on implementing patient blood management to improve global blood health status
The World Health Organization (2021)	The urgent need to implement patient blood management: policy brief



Sample Action Log
HTC Meeting.doc



Sample HTC
Agenda.doc



Sample HTC Annual
Report.doc