National Transfusion Laboratory Managers Advisory Group

National Blood Transfusion Committee

Minutes of the
National Transfusion Laboratory Managers (NTLM)
Advisory Group Meeting

Thursday 11th September 2025
10:00hrs – 15:30hrs
@ NHSBT Birmingham New Street – Meeting Room 3

Present (19)		
Julie Staves	JS	Chair and South East region
Kerry Dowling	KD	Deputy Chair, TLM, Southampton
Jane Murphy	JM	Administrator
Pete Baker	PB	North West Region
Alison Muir	AM	North East and Yorkshire Region (MS Teams)
Katherine Philpott	KP	East of England Region
Patricia Richards	PR	London Region (MS Teams)
Michelle Scott	MS	North East and Yorkshire Region
Anna Smith	AS	Midlands (West) Region
Jey Visuvanathan	JV	London Region (MS Teams)
Helen Wilkinson	HW	Midlands (East) Region
Tim Wreford-Bush	TWB	South West Region
Kirk Beard	KB	Stock Management & Production Manager, NHSBT (MS Teams)
Ruth Evans	RE	Scientific and Clinical Training Organisation and Workforce Development, NHSBT
Chris Philips	CP	Head of Hospital Customer Service, NHSBT
Chris Robbie	CR	Senior Haemovigilance Specialist, MHRA (MS Teams)
Nikki Swarbrick	NS	Laboratory Incident Specialist, SHOT
Jim Barker	JB	Head of Strategy, NHSBT
Renata Gomes	RG	Chief Scientific Officer, NHSBT
Matt Hazel	MH	Consultant Clinical Scientist, RCI, NHSBT
Graham Kirkup	GK	Head of Service & Resource – Logistics, NHSBT (MS Teams)
Jonathan Massie	JM	Clinical Fellow, Filton, NHSBT
Naim Rahimi	NR	Clinical Fellow, Oxford, NHSBT
Dave Roberts	DR	Medical Director for Pathology, NHSBT
Louise Sherliker	LS	Transfusion Transformation, NHSBT
Delia Smith	DS	Projects & Customer Insights Lead, Customer Services, NHSBT

Apologies (5)		
Mike Brewer	MB	MOD Defence Pathology
Anna Capps-Jenner	ACJ	London Region (private labs)
Sam Kershaw	SK	North East and Yorkshire Region
Wisdom Musabaike	WM	Assistant Director, RCI, NHSBT
Zoe Sammut	ZS	South East Region

Minutes		
25.25	**Welcome & Apologies**	**Actions**
	JS welcomed and thanked everyone for attending / supporting the meeting. All gave brief introductions. Apologies were given from those listed above prior to the meeting.	
26.25	**Minutes from last meeting, 10th June 2025**	
	Reviewed and accepted as a true and accurate record. Action log reviewed / updated.	
27.25	**NHSBT CSO**	
	Renata Gomes was appointed as Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) in April 2025 and gave an insight into her background and vision for the future. Renata officially stepped into the role of Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) in April 2025. She shared a bit about her background in forensic medicine, along with her experience leading research and innovation projects. Renata spoke about her plans — focusing on new technologies, and collaboration across teams.	
28.25	**IBI**	
	Updates given. 7a – Benchmarking (JS) Led by Lise Escourt. The only area that has received some indication it might receive funding. The team is working on developing key performance indicators and collaborating with the Model Hospital. Progress has been slow, and efforts are being made to find a mechanism without requiring hours of data collection. A realistic timeline for tangible outcomes is estimated at six to eight months. NHS England and the Model Hospital are actively looking to assist. 7b – T2024 Update provided within agenda item 29.25. 7c – Workforce Planning (KD) Probably no funding available. Recently met with pathology network directors who agreed to go back to laboratory managers to discuss/look at capacity planning document. Two workstreams currently; getting engagement so people know what the plan is and how to escalate. Other workstream is working with the TP Group.	

	7d – Training (RG) Now led by RG. Funding is unavailable this financial year. Extensive work carried out on a proposed training and development system. Deep dives have been conducted into workforce skills / capabilities and surveys looking at skills / knowledge in terms of constitution. Findings led to engagement with colleges and regulators to address these. Last meeting will focus on Transfusion Practitioners. In the absence of funding, the group will meet every two months to explore solutions. Additionally, groups 3a and 7d will merge into a UK-wide group meeting quarterly, as colleagues outside England found it valuable. 7e – SHOT (NS) Aim to produce a document that will support resources and sign posting to standards. By the end of November, a mapping and metrics exercise is planned to review existing materials and identify what is already in place. The expectation is that many of the necessary elements are already covered, though some new components may emerge. A webinar is scheduled for the end of October to explain this further. An FAQ has already been released, but plan to revisit and ensure relevant information is effectively shared. 7f – IT, digital, data and outcomes (LS) LS co-chairs with David Ashby. Digital and IT links in with so many other groups. This group has seven key projects, the first being "implementation of hospital blood management systems" which is the priority area and been recognised as the one that needs to be promoted. LS gave an overview of each area.	
29.25	**Transfusion Transformation**	
	Update provided by Louise Sherliker. The Transfusion Transformation strategy has progressed since the symposium in June 2024: • Development of the five strategic themes • Extensive stakeholder engagement to confirm recommendations • Alignment to IBI recommendations • Strengthened governance to address gaps highlighted by IBI Transfusion 2024 review • NHSE/DHSC input and ownership – they will publish strategy The funding model is not confirmed and will require further consideration. LS gave overview of five strategic pillars: 1) Governance model to ensure effective delivery and patient benefit. 2) Quality transfusion care to improve safety and outcome. 3) Data and digital transformation. 4) Workforce capacity and capability. 5) Research to innovate in transfusion care. Highlighted: • Transfusion Transformation IBI Mapping • Engagement Plan Finally, LS provided an update on the Blood & Group project / programme structure which is at green status and is reported to board level: • A2a Education to support clinical transfusion practices • B1 Scientific / technical education / training • C1c Hospital blood data integration • D4 Transfusion research network	

30.25	**Strategic Review Hospital Laboratory Services**	
	Jim Barker, Head of Strategy at NHSBT and Dave Roberts, Medical Director for Pathology at NHSBT joined the meeting to discuss the development of NHSBT Pathology and Testing Strategy. Part of the process is to engage with customers and obtain their input. For this meeting, the group were asked for their feedback on the following five key questions: 1) Acknowledging Pressures • How are current demands (e.g. elective recovery, staffing, amber alerts) impacting your lab's ability to deliver? 2) Future Service Collaboration • What pathology or wider services could NHSBT offer collaboratively to relieve pressure? • Are there specific tests where greater central support would be valuable? 3) Tailored Solutions • What is the variation of need from one lab/location/region to another? • Would a tiered or regionalised model better reflect local needs? 4) Strategic Partnership • How can NHSBT better listen and respond to your evolving needs? • What would a co-designed future service model look like? 5) Pathology Networks Interface • How do Pathology Networks influence your service delivery and strategic decisions? • Are there risks or tensions between local autonomy and national consolidation? JB to collate feedback from discussion and share with group. Suggested a follow-up call end of September / beginning of October.	
31.25	**Logistics from Hospitals**	
	Graham Kirkup, Head of Service and Resource – Logistics, NHSBT presented the proposal on the changes to how NHSBT perform reverse logistics from hospitals. • NHSBT are looking to stop the booking of return legs when couriers are undertaking Routine deliveries. Performance of this service is poor, with less than 2 boxes collected in more than 50% of cases, with costs exceeding £350k p.a. • Agreement reached on call to run a pilot of the change in the Colindale site, giving hospitals a known routine delivery with guaranteed "return delivery" service. Any deliveries made by NHSBT own drivers over and above this guaranteed delivery will also offer a return delivery, but those by third-party couriers will not.	
32.25	**Presentation from Brenmoor**	
	Melissa Robinson, Sales Manager at Brenmoor gave a brief presentation to showcase their Blood Bag Tags.	
33.25	**Webinars / Drop-in Sessions**	
	JS provided an update. Held four sessions covering the following topics:	

	• BCR • Change control and validation • Staffing • Neg survey results All sessions have been very well received with attendance much higher than expected. Very positive feedback received. Total of 221 delegates have attended all sessions. Next planned sessions: • Sep 18th; Capacity Planning Webinar. This topic came from feedback received from attendees. Hosted by Kerry Dowling and Jen Davies • Oct 22nd; Stock Sharing Webinar. Hosted by Anna Capps-Jenner and Cath Lorenzen. • Nov 20th; BSMS Webinar. Hosted by Danny Gaskin and Ness Hayes. Group agreed that all webinars should be recorded – just the presentation part not the Q&A session that follows. Once recordings of the webinars have been edited they will be hosted on the Patient Blood Management England - YouTube Group suggested following topics for 2026: • BCR – Mar (MD) • IT Script survey – Sep 2026 (NS) • In-house training / UKTLC – Oct / Nov (KD/PB) • Temperature monitoring • MHRA / UKAS • SHOT / SABRE (human factors / common themes) • How to investigate / report an incident? • Simplify competency testing • Concession / delays • Business continuity / delays **ACTION: JS to put together schedule of webinars for 2026.**	**JS**
34.25	**Education and Training**	
	Ruth Evans provided an update. • Placement Students; 50 students / 15 at NHSBT. Survey looking at funded placements. • Masters; no sponsorship for international students. Change to distance learning. Mandatory blocks on a distance learning course on a visitor visa. • National Survey; back to 85% • RCI; Department asked if it could be considered running a course for those who are doing the higher specialist diploma. Have suggested running once a year, two different locations. • Advanced Medics Course; Neonates and Paediatrics in Transfusion, still NHSE funded places available. • Funding; still not received for 2024/25. • Digital Content for Universities; to create resources to support VR. Working with a company who will rent headsets which will be pre-loaded with transfusion packages. • BBTS Specialist Certificate; currently being updated. • Intermediate Transfusion Practice for Medics; increase to three days of practical's from next year. • Basic Introduction to Transfusion; course offered to all support grade staff and is available from April 2026 to both internal / external staff.	

35.25	**MHRA**	
	Chris Robbie provided update. • SABRE; 6 months into new platform. Few minor issues that have been resolved. One major issue had a problem with updates to serious adverse reactions that had been migrated from the previous system. Currently, working towards implementing a fix. • Provisional list of inspections; still finishing off inspections from last year. Moved to autumn meeting.	
36.25	**NHSBT**	
	<u>Customer Services Update</u> Chris Phillips provided the following update: On Time In Full (OTIF) • Exceeding target. Red Cell expiries • Influenced by over collection of group A to support pooled platelet production. Improved, partly due to low stock levels. Platelet expiries • Influenced by carrying high stocks to counter variation in supply and demand of a short shelf-life component. Hospitals are encouraged to only order A D neg where necessary. Donor Marketing • July; launched a new Giving Type video, radio and social media advertising including an emergency-focused film inspiring people to take action and book an appointment. • August; aired the first episode of our Channel 4.0 partnership 'Love is in the Blood'. The series pairs experienced donors with first timers on a blind date and aims to inspire the next generation of donors by showing how natural and social giving blood can be. Alert Status • Pre-Amber for O D negative and B D negative red cells. Green for all other groups/components • Will move to Green as soon as we are confident, we can maintain stable stock levels • Huge 'thank you' to hospitals and donors for support Inventory management - easing pressure on O D negative red cells • Can you safely use O D positive? If possible, consider substituting • Please consider dual inventory when supplying HEMS teams Customer Satisfaction Survey • Autumn survey is now live! Please support us and promote in your region; the survey helps assess our effectiveness, improve services, gives feedback to front line staff and supports diagnostic accreditation. EDN • Reviewing support level. How critical is EDN? How quickly do you need EDN to be recovered? What are the impacts on hospitals and patients if EDN is not available?	

	Credits • New electronic claim form will be in place from 6 October to resolve cyber security issues. R0 orders • Please order what you need even if you expect a substitution; we need to capture true demand **National Blood Group Genotyping Programme** • Please encourage submission of patient samples – free of charge until 02 Jan 2026. **RCI Update** Matt Hazel provided an update on behalf of Wisdom Musabaike. UKAS / MHRA • No update Staffing • Impact on turnaround times. • No impact on urgent cases. • Recruiting. RCI Assist • Encourage teams to use. • Please feedback any comments on use of the tool. Colindale Refurbishment • Ongoing. • Laboratory in place by April 2026. RCI Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII) • Action assigned by Quality Team to feedback. • MH gave an overview of incident along with shared learning points.	
37.25	**Engagement with Other Bodies**	
	Guidance on the Transfusion of Non-binary Patients • No update. Guidance of Reporting Blood Groups on Patients Who Are Going for Organ Donation • Guidance document came out. No further action so item to be removed from future agendas. Culture Survey • Covered with Transfusion Transformation. Question will be asked in the UKTLC survey about what people have done following the recommendations. Item to be removed from future agendas.	
38.25	**AOB**	
	Notice Given for Exchange (Sickle) Patients. Order Blood As soon as Appointment Booked (KB) • KB asked the group; is it best to focus on patients with antibodies or would it be easier to put on OBOS as soon as you know patient is booked for an exchange? Group feedback what happens at their Hospitals / Trusts.	

	Change in Pulse / OBOS (KB) • Pushing for a change to allow hospitals to order by volume (mls) by April 2026. Hopefully, get some of the group involved once dates are known. Antigen Negative (KB) • Asked group to promote to only order antigen negative if patient has antibodies. NTLM Logo (JS) • Suggested having a logo for group. **ACTION: Group to send through suggestions for a logo to JS.** 2026 Face to Face Meeting (JS) • Group agreed meeting to be held at NHSBT Birmingham New Street, Wednesday 14th October 2026. Terms of Reference (JS) • Re-drafted and sent to Andy Charlton in June 2025. To be ratified at the NBTC Meeting on 22nd September 2025. Patient Representative (JS) • JS asked group if they think group needs a patient representative. **ACTION: JS to contact Andy Charlton, NBTC regarding a patient representative for the group.** Nikki Swarbrick (JS) • JS welcomed Nikki from SHOT to the group who will join future meetings along with colleague Vicky Tuckley. • Nikki mentioned how SHOT wish to reach out to the group to ask how they can help? What channels can they best communicate the resources they have to offer? Are there any resources SHOT has not got that TLMs would like to see? Please get in touch with Nikki with any suggestions. Electronic Issues (TWB) • Question put to the group if anyone checks the samples again. Group held discussion.	**ALL** **JS**
39.25	**Date of Next Meeting**	
	• Tuesday 18th November, 11am – 12:30pm via MS Teams.	