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2.1 Bacterial Screening of Platelet components

In March 2010 NHSBT informed you of the decision to introduce the screening of platelet components for bacterial contamination. The project group has been working on this implementation and plans are now nearing completion.

Our intention is to implement bacterial screening at each of our manufacturing centres in turn, starting with Manchester in Late January and finishing with Colindale in late March. Each centre will move to 100% bacterial screening from their go live date. As NHSBT move platelets around the country to balance stocks it is possible that all hospitals will start to see these bacterially screened platelets from late January. The platelet product codes and specifications will be the same as the existing codes for extended life platelets as listed in the current component portfolio. We will inform you of any additional codes required, for example paediatric platelets via the December update and the component portfolio will be updated prior to implementation.

The bacterial screening process will involve NHSBT holding platelets for 36 hours prior to screening Platelets will be released following a ‘negative to date’ screen result, but NHSBT will continue to monitor the test throughout the shelf life of the platelet component. There may be a slight rise in product recalls associated with this continued screening but it is not anticipated that the numbers involved will be high enough to create a significant impact on individual hospitals.

Richard Gray, Process Improvement Manager

2.2 Online Survey to Measure Compliance with 2007/001 Health Service Circular

This questionnaire is a repeat of the 2008 survey to measure progress in implementing the recommendations in the HSC Better Blood Transfusion Safe and Appropriate Use of Blood. Completion of the questionnaire will provide a national overview of implementation to help direct the future work priorities for the National Blood Transfusion Committee and Regional Transfusion Committees.

As in 2008, the survey is online. To ensure consistency of data we request ONE collated response from each Trust or Independent hospital. A PDF of the survey is available to download from the survey website to help facilitate discussion between members of the Hospital Transfusion Team before submitting a combined online response.

The survey and instructions for completion are available at the NHSBT Audits website address: https://www.nhsbtaudits.co.uk/. Login is via your Trust login portal for NHS Trusts and via Hospital login portal for Independent hospitals.

Members of Hospital Transfusion Teams have already been sent details and an email link to the survey. The deadline for completion is Friday 17th December 2010.

If you have any queries regarding completion of the survey, or if you have not already received a request to complete the survey, please contact a member of our Customer Services Administration Team Tel: 01865 440043 Email: NHSBT.CustomerService@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Rebecca Gerrard, Head of Better Blood Transfusion

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2.3 Educational Tools

Calendar - Iron in your diet

The NHSBT Better Blood Transfusion Team have produced a calendar for next year focusing on the importance of iron in your diet, how much iron is needed and food items that are iron-rich.

This A4 sized calendar is designed to fold into a ‘toblerone’ shape and sit on your desk-top.

A Drop of Knowledge - Guidance for new and developing Transfusion Practitioners

The NHSBT Better Blood Transfusion Team have produced a revised and updated version (Version 6) of the above publication.

Platelet Factsheet for Health Care professionals

Following feedback the NHSBT Better Blood Transfusion Team have produced a revised version (Version 2) of the A5-sized factsheet for health care professionals highlighting the key facts about platelets.

Copies of all these publications can be ordered from the Customer Service Administration Team, tel: 01865 381042 or e-mail: NHSBT.CustomerService@nhsbt.nhs.uk. When ordering, please state the number of copies required and your full postal address. Orders will be initially limited to 25 copies per hospital. A pdf version of the Platelet Factsheet and A Drop of Knowledge can also be supplied upon request.

Rebecca Gerrard, Head of Better Blood Transfusion
3. Training & Education

3.1 Training & Education events and courses

A full list of NHSBT training events, which are open to hospital personnel, is available on the following area of our website:

http://hospital.blood.co.uk/training/index.asp

If you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact your local Customer Service (Hospital Liaison) Manager, Transfusion Liaison Nurse or either of us, using the details below.

For further information please visit the NHS Blood and Transplant hospitals website on: http://hospital.blood.co.uk

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