

Supply Chain Modernisation

Hospital Questions and Answers – Updated 31 July 2015

1. What are the proposed changes?

The NHSBT Board has agreed to go ahead with the proposal to transfer manufacturing operations from Newcastle and Sheffield to Manchester and move to 24/7 processing at the Manchester site. By consolidating into larger, more productive facilities, we can ensure we make the best use of every donation and ensure flexibility to react quickly to changes in volume and component specification.

2. What is the timescale?

We do not expect Manufacturing activities to transfer until 2017 at the earliest

3. How will the changes impact on us?

The centres at Newcastle and Sheffield will remain stock holding units (SHUs) to maintain supply to the current hospitals in those areas and the SHUs will be supported by Manchester. Deliveries, including emergency deliveries, will be made from the local SHUs, as is current practice.

4. How will you ensure adequate supply to replace the previous local manufacturing provision?

The SHUs will continue to be appropriately stocked with routine components which will allow us to provide the same level of service as we do today

5. What stock will be held locally at the SHUs?

The SHUs will be appropriately stocked with routine components which include components such as units for exchange transfusion, Large Volume Transfusion (LVT), neonatal red cell splits, irradiated units and phenotyped red cells. HLA matched components are currently provided from centres across the country and this network will continue to support the SHUs.

6. Have you assessed the clinical risk for the increased delivery times for emergency non-planned situations?

NHSBT Haematology Consultants are conducting a Clinical Risk Assessment with a focus on the clinical impact of the changes. This will take into account hospital needs and any hospital feedback received.

7. Are there any plans for holding specialised non-stock/limited stock blood components? Or will they be provided directly from Manchester?

We will put in place specific arrangements to ensure the supply of more specialist components, such as those for intra-uterine transfusion and washed red cells and platelets. This may include routine storage of some short shelf life components at the SHU to provide emergency cover locally. For those patients with complex serology we plan to continue to hold an appropriate red cell stockholding in the SHU's, linking into the Red Cell Immunohaematology (RCI) laboratory. There will be no change regarding the provision of granulocytes.

Blood and Transplant

We would be happy to discuss these arrangements to confirm our understanding of your requirements.

8. What blood components are considered specialised short shelf life?

1. Washed red cells
2. Platelets in additive solution – ‘washed platelets’
3. Red cells and platelets for intra-uterine transfusion

9. Will the SHUs at Newcastle and Sheffield continue to irradiate locally?

Yes.

10. How will the changes impact on the continuation of the provision of other services provided locally at Newcastle and Sheffield by NHSBT?

The change to manufacturing does not impact on other services provided to hospitals. Hospitals Services, RCI etc will continue to be provided at the centre.

11. Have you assessed the risk of delays due to adverse weather and/or traffic congestion across the Pennines?

We have an excellent track record for ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of blood across England and North Wales and have carefully considered the logistical implications of transferring manufacturing activity from Newcastle and Sheffield. We already operate a logistics network east of the Pennines to transport testing samples to Manchester and our experience in this supports the movement of blood components. We are confident we will be able to maintain the supply of blood and blood components to hospitals in all circumstances, including in poor weather conditions and traffic congestion.

12. Are there any other changes proposed?

Following on from this decision, as a separate initiative, we will begin a review of our estate in the Leeds/Sheffield area to provide options for the future. We will consult with hospitals as part of this review to help develop our proposal, with a view to taking this to our Board by the end of the 2015/16 financial year.

We will consult hospital customers throughout the review and include feedback in the proposal and recommendations. Your local Customer Service Manager will be happy to receive any feedback and if required arrange face-to-face meetings.