INVESTIGATIONS OF BLOOD DONOR COMPLIANCE

Update for SaBTO September 2012

Background

In May 2011, SaBTO made a recommendation to change the blood donor deferral period from lifetime to 12 months following MSM activity. The modelling work indicated that improved donor compliance would be a major benefit to blood safety. An update was provided to SaBTO in May 2012 on four areas of work designed to examine the impact of the change on blood safety and availability.

Progress

1. Collection of donor demography data.

Aim: to see whether a change could be detected in the donor demographic profile which may be suggestive of an increase in MSM coming forward as donors ie an increase in young, urban male donors. The joint NHSBT/HPA epidemiology team has been collecting and analysing this data, but as of August 2012 no such change had yet been observed. The dataset to date would be more than adequate in size to detect such a change.

2. In depth discussions with donors who have tested positive.

Aim: to explore any potential non-compliance in donors with positive test results. The pro forma used when virus-positive donors are interviewed by a Blood Service clinician has been revised (the same form is used in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and a different form in Scotland). The 2012 data will be analysed by the NHSBT/ HPA Epidemiology team in the spring of 2013, but at this stage there is no obvious difference in the number of positive test results, risk factors, reasons for donations or donor compliance.

3. A survey of donors.

Aim: to investigate donor understanding of the questions asked on the donor health check form, and their compliance with the questions. The UK Blood Services Forum has approved in principle funding for the HPA to conduct an on-line survey and analyse the data. The protocol is currently under development, with input sought from all UK Blood Services. The aim is to conduct the survey during 2012-13.

4. A specific study of compliance by MSM

Aim: to conduct a study similar to that published by Grenfell et al to establish if the change in selection criteria has changed attitudes and compliance in the specific group. This would be led by HPA colleagues following completion of the more general survey of donors described above. At this stage, however, no funding for this has been identified.

A further update will be provided in June 2013.

SaBTO Secretariat
22/08/12