

Change Notification for the UK Blood Transfusion Services

Date of Issue: 13 October 2025

Implementation: to be determined by each Service

No. 22 – 2025

Injectable Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention

This notification includes the following changes:

	BM-DSG Bone Marrow & Peripheral Blood Stem Cell	CB-DSG Cord Blood	GDRI Geographical Disease Risk Index	TD-DSG Tissue – Deceased Donors	TL-DSG Tissue – Live Donors	WB-DSG Whole Blood & Components	Red Book Guidelines for the BTS in the UK
1. Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV	●	●	○	●	●	○	○
2. Tissues Safety Entry	●	●	○	●	●	○	○
3. Changes to the A-Z index	●	●	○	●	●	○	○

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Chair, Standing Advisory Committee
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Changes are indicated using the key below. This formatting will not appear in the final entry.

original text	«inserted text»	deleted text
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1. Changes apply to: **Bone Marrow DSG**
Cord Blood DSG
Tissues (Deceased Donors) DSG
Tissues (Live Donors) DSG

Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV

(revised entry)

<i>Obligatory</i>	Must not donate if: «a)» Donor has taken «oral» Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) or Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) in the previous three months. «b)» The donor has received an injection for PrEP in the previous 24 months.» Assess any donor using PrEP or PEP for tissue safety risks relating to sexual activity.
<i>Discretionary</i>	«If: • it is over three months since the donor last used oral PrEP or PEP, and/or • it is over 24 months since the donor last received an injection for PrEP, and • there is no other tissue safety risk, accept.» If it is over three months since use of PrEP or PEP and there is no other tissue safety risk, accept
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<u>HIV</u> <u>Human Bite</u> <u>Inoculation Injury</u> <u>Tissues Safety Entry</u>
<i>Additional Information</i>	The use of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), e.g. Truvada®, to prevent HIV is increasing. Individuals taking PrEP are unlikely to be eligible to donate due to criteria within the tissue safety entry. However, PrEP is also available via private prescription and/or online pharmacies and may be used by individuals who would not otherwise be deferred. «PrEP is normally given in tablet form but longer-acting injectable PrEP e.g. cabotegravir (Apretude®) may also be used in individuals who are not suitable for oral medication. Cabotegravir injections are given on an 8-weekly basis to ensure adequate HIV protection. Low levels of cabotegravir can be detected for many months in treated individuals, even after injections have been stopped.» Use of PrEP may interfere with testing for HIV by delaying seroconversion or giving unclear results in a positive donor. For this reason, it is important that donors who have taken «oral» PrEP in the previous three months«, or injected PrEP in the previous 24 months,» are not accepted to donate, even if they do not have another tissue safety risk.

	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) has a similar mechanism of action to PrEP and may also interfere with testing results. In the UK PEP is prescribed to people who have been exposed to someone who may have HIV. This includes through sexual activity or exposure through a needle stick injury. Donors who have received PEP will usually be ineligible to donate for the same reason they were given PEP. If the underlying reason for taking PrEP or PEP warrants a longer deferral period, this should be applied. This guidance will be updated as more information about the use and effects of PrEP/PEP becomes available.
<i>Reason for Change</i>	«Addition of a 24-month deferral for recipients of injectable PrEP.» This entry was revised to support the implementation of recommendations from the FAIR-III report.

2. Changes apply to: **Bone Marrow DSG**
Cord Blood DSG
Tissues (Deceased Donors) DSG
Tissues (Live Donors) DSG

Tissues Safety Entry

(revised entry)

<i>Definition</i>	Individual risk is based on the donor's sexual behaviour, including new partners and the number of partners in the 3 months prior to donation. Partner risk is based on sexual contact with a partner who may, at a population level, be at higher risk of acquiring infection, as described in this entry. Sexual contact is defined as oral, vaginal or anal sex. Anal sex is defined as penile-anal intercourse only. It does not apply to oro-anal sex or the use of sex toys. Chemsex is sex while using stimulant drugs taken for the specific purpose of enhancing sexual experience and reducing inhibitions. Chemsex does not refer to sex after using alcohol or recreational drugs for other purposes, nor the use of drugs such as Viagra or Cialis to treat erectile dysfunction.
<i>Obligatory</i>	Information must be provided so that those at risk do not donate. 1. You must not donate if: You think you need a test for HIV/AIDS, HTLV or hepatitis. 2. You must never donate if: - You are HIV positive. - You are HTLV positive. - You are a hepatitis B carrier. - You are a hepatitis C carrier. 3. You must not donate for at least 12 months: After stopping habitual use of injected drugs of addiction. 4. You must not donate for at least 3 months if: - You have taken Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) / Truvada «by mouth to prevent» for prevention of HIV - You have taken or been prescribed Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) «by mouth to prevent» for prevention of HIV.

	If the underlying reason for taking PrEP or PEP warrants a longer deferral period, this should be applied. «5. You must not donate for at least 24 months if: You have received PrEP as an injection to prevent HIV e.g. cabotegravir (Apretude®). If the underlying reason for taking PrEP or PEP warrants a longer deferral period, this should be applied.» «6.» 5. You must not donate for at least 3 months if: a) You have received money or drugs for sex. b) You have injected, or been injected with, non-prescription drugs, even only once. This includes, for example, bodybuilding drugs or injectable tanning agents. You may be able to donate if a doctor prescribed the drugs. Please ask. c) You have injected, been injected with, or used non-parenteral Chemsex drugs. «7.» 6. Individual risk criteria (FAIR): You must not donate for at least 3 months if: a) You have taken part in chemsex activity, including the use of stimulant drugs. This risk applies for all sexual contact. b) You have been diagnosed with gonorrhoea. You must wait for at least three months after you have successfully completed treatment and been discharged from further follow up. c) You have had more than one sexual partner in the last 3 months AND you have had anal sex with any of these partners. d) You have had anal sex with a new sexual partner. For the purpose of donor selection, a new partner is someone that you have not had sex with before or a previous partner with whom you have restarted a sexual relationship in the last 3 months. If you are in a sexual relationship with one partner only, you can donate once it is three months from the date of first sexual contact, even if you are having anal sex. «8.» 7. You must not donate for at least 3 months after sex (even if you used a condom or other protective) with: A partner who is, or you think may be: a) HIV or HTLV positive. b) A hepatitis B carrier. c) A hepatitis C carrier. d) A partner who has received money or drugs for sex.
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	e) A partner who has injected, or been injected with non-prescription drugs. This includes, for example, bodybuilding drugs or injected tanning agents. You may be able to give if a doctor prescribed the drugs, please ask.
<i>See if Relevant</i>	<u>Addiction and Drug Abuse</u> <u>Hepatitis B</u> <u>Hepatitis C</u> <u>Hepatitis of Unknown Origin</u> <u>HIV</u> <u>HTLV</u> <u>Infection - General</u> <u>Pre- or Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV</u> <u>Sexually Transmitted Disease</u> <u>Syphilis</u>
<i>Additional Information</i>	The FAIR (For the Assessment of Individualised Risk) report (2020) recommended changes to blood donor selection policy to allow a more individualised risk-based approach. This approach was approved by ministers in devolved administrations and has now been implemented by the UK Transfusion Services. The FAIR III working group recommended that a similar approach could be applied to tissue and cell donors in principle, acknowledging that the current donor selection policies already permit an individual risk assessment approach for life saving tissues and cells. FAIR identified several factors associated with a higher risk of blood borne infections. These include the recent diagnosis of a bacterial sexually transmitted disease and the following sexual behaviours: • new or multiple sexual partners • anal sex • participation in chemsex activity Drugs used for chemsex include methamphetamine, mephedrone and GHB/GBL, but other drugs may be used (e.g. ketamine, poppers, cocaine). Chemsex is a high-risk activity because it usually involves multiple sexual partners, sometimes for extended periods of time. The drugs involved also reduce inhibition leading to riskier sexual activity. The drugs used in both Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV (PrEP and PEP) may interfere with the routine HIV screening tests carried out on all tissue and cell donors. «For this reason, donors who have taken oral PrEP or PEP in the previous three months, or received injectable PrEP in the previous 24 months, should not donate. This applies even if they are otherwise eligible under individual risk criteria.» For this reason, donors who have taken PrEP or PEP should not donate for three months, even if they are otherwise eligible under individual risk criteria. The deferral periods specified above may be reduced by doing individual risk assessment if the risk of acquiring an infectious disease may be outweighed by the risk of delaying a lifesaving transplantation.
<i>Reason for Change</i>	«Addition of a 24-month deferral for recipients of injectable PrEP.» The entry was revised to include individual risk assessment of recent sexual behaviour for all donors. The deferral for donors whose sexual partners have been sexually active in Sub-Saharan Africa has been removed. This supports implementation of recommendations from the FAIR III Report.

3. Changes apply to: **Bone Marrow DSG**
Cord Blood DSG
Tissues (Deceased Donors) DSG
Tissues (Live Donors) DSG

The following redirections will be added to the **A-Z index**

Apretude® » Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV

Cabotegravir » Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV

Injected PrEP » Pre- and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV