

Histocompatibility & Immunogenetics Support for Transplantation in Scotland.

Scottish Donation and Transplant Group, 9th April 2020

Submitted by Dave Turner and Ann-Margaret Little

Staffing

Glasgow H&I: 1 band 6 vacancy

Edinburgh H&I: 1.5 wte Band 6 vacancies

On call rotas

The one in four Consultant/Principal Clinical Scientist rota supporting deceased donor kidney, SPK, islet and cardiac transplantation in Scotland has been re-established following the appointment of Catherine Hastie, Principal Clinical Scientist in Glasgow.

Quality in Organ Donation (QuOD) project

UK wide study, ongoing, funded until 2020.

Donor HLA typing

Both labs continue to meet the KPI for deceased donor typing.

Donor Characterisation Review

A number of meetings of NHSBT-ODT Donor Characterisation Review Working Groups have taken place in the last few months. It has become clear that NHSBT will not commission Donor Characterisation testing (HLA typing and microbiology tests) in Scotland (and Wales and NI), but only in England. NSS-NSD are involved in meetings of Working Group 2 (Finance and Commissioning) and are considering future funding arrangements to ensure donor testing is maintained in the two H&I labs in Scotland. DT is involved in ongoing meetings of Working Group 3 looking at electronic reporting of donor testing results (HLA typing and micro) to ODT.

Joint European Federation for Immunogenetics (EFI) and British Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (BSHI) Conference, 26th-29th April 2020, Glasgow

Along with many other scientific and medical conferences, our meeting has been postponed. We hope to host this in April 2021.

Coronavirus pandemic

Because of the decrease in solid organ transplant activity, both laboratories have experienced a decline in workload due to a decrease in out-patient and clinic activities.

Tissue Donation Update April 2020

Deceased Tissue Donation

During the current COVID19 pandemic there are a number of changes that have been put in place to ensure the safety of both the staff and of the retrieved tissue:

- All deceased tissue donors will be tested and confirmed negative for COVID19 before tissue retrieval proceeds.
- Due to the nature of the tissue retrieval process additional PPE is required i.e. FFP3 masks and waterproof aprons – SNBTS has just taken receipt of the FFP3 masks and are waiting on face fitting of the masks and are waiting on the aprons.
- There is a concern that mortuaries may get very busy during this pandemic which raises concerns re the risk of cross-contamination through the mortuary particularly as it appears that a body bag is not being considered necessary for COVID19 deaths – in view of this before progressing with a mortuary retrieval the staff will always touch base with the mortuary staff to assess the situation at the given time before proceeding.

During the financial year 2019/20 the number of tissue donors was less than the actual potential due to the fact that SNBTS was not processing tissue in the first 6 months of this year; despite this there were in total 43 tissue donors. Out of these 43 donors, 27 were also organ donors and donated heart valves, and the remaining 16 donors were tissue only donors, 13 donating heart valves and 7 of the 16 also donating tendons.

Please note that due to the current pandemic the stats are approximate for the last few months of the financial year.

Pancreatic Islet Programme

Islet transplant rate has been reduced in the UK due to concerns re safety of recipients (due to the need for immunosuppression) during the pandemic – there are however a handful of patients that have been identified where going ahead with an islet transplant is considered to be in the patients' best interest – in view of this if a suitable donor becomes available and we have enough staff at the time to carry out the islet isolation this will be progressed.

In the financial year 2019/20, 21 pancreata were processed by SNBTS, of which 14 (67%) yielded a successful transplantable product, leading to a transplant on 8 occasions (product conversion to transplant being dependent on intended recipient characteristics).

Dr Sharon Zahra

Clinical Lead, TCAT, SNBTS

2nd April 2020

NHSBT Report for SDTG – 9 April 2020

As with the rest of the NHS and Government, NHSBT is increasingly having to divert its resource into managing the COVID-19 pandemic. A national emergency team comprising senior colleagues is meeting daily to review the situation nationally and as an organisation. Through this period the main focus for NHSBT is ensuring the safety of staff and colleagues and maintaining the supply of blood and its components.

As a consequence, NHSBT has had to put on hold various non-urgent projects and activity and this includes the work on the new Organ Donation and Transplantation strategy which has been paused for the time being.

Organ donation activity within UK hospitals is reducing as critical care capacity is urgently required for those with COVID-19. Alongside this a growing number of transplant units are having to suspend their programmes. These are unprecedented times.

Despite saying that the December meeting would be my last SDTG meeting, my role as NED has been extended until a replacement NED can be appointed.

Keith Rigg
April 2020

Human Tissue Authority

Headlines

All HTA onsite inspections and onsite audits postponed until at least the end of June 2020 due to Covid19. No ODT audits were planned for this period.

HTA Transplant Advisory Group

The HTA's Transplant Advisory Group meets twice yearly. The last meeting was on 23 October 2019. The May 2020 has been postponed due to Covid19.

Living Donation

- The project looking at the sustainability of the Independent Assessor framework across the UK has been completed. The final refresher training modules for Independent Assessors will be uploaded shortly. These cover case categories for donations, mental capacity legislation (applicable to each UK country), unusual case circumstances.
- The scheduled training day for new IAs was 7 April 2020 but was postponed due to Covid19.
- We are seeing a real decrease in the number of applications for living donation as many centres have decided to stop surgery for the time being.

Deceased Donation

Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Act 2019

- The Act places a duty on the HTA to provide guidance about how deemed consent in England will work in practice, including the information a person in a qualifying relationship would need to provide as evidence that the deceased person would not have agreed to their organs being donated.
- A 12 week consultation on Code of Practice F ran from 4 July 2019 until 26 September 2019. The Code has been significantly revised as a result of feedback. It has been signed off by the Authority (Board) and cleared by Ministers and is currently laid in Parliament, alongside Code A, awaiting final approval.
- The public version of the Code is due to be signed off by the HTA CEO shortly.
- Minor amends to the Welsh Code have been agreed with relevant colleagues in Wales.

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- All revised Codes will be published on 20 May 2020 to coincide with the launch of deemed consent in England.

Living Donation Scotland update: SDTG 9 April 2020

Timely Transplantation: Link nephrologists met at the annual living donation meeting in December 2019 and agreed future data collection to be in collaboration with information being collected nationally to avoid duplication. Dr Geddes to liaise. The concurrent nursing meeting proposed a national living donation and transplantation e-learning module for renal nurses and associated healthcare professionals. There was multi-disciplinary support for the Renal Education and Choices at Home (REACH) initiative being expanded throughout Scotland. REACH home visits are now on hold during the Covid-19 pandemic.

UK Living Kidney Donation Network Meeting in February – Dr Colin Geddes and Julie Glen from Glasgow were invited to present ‘What we can learn from Scotland’ which received positive feedback from the meeting

Patient Groups: A meeting with key kidney charities in Scotland was held in December to ensure consistent messaging surrounding deceased and living donor transplantation. The subsequent patient and BAME events have been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Living Donation Publicity week 9th-13th March – Despite being at the beginning of the intense Covid-19 media coverage, national newspapers still picked up many living donor case study stories including a photo call and interviews with donors, recipients and Dr Manlove from Glasgow University who developed the algorithm for the UK kidney sharing scheme. BAME donation was highlighted with TV coverage on Scotland Tonight.

Living Donor Transplant Figures 2019-20 Provisional figures for Scotland – 100 living donor transplants and 103 donors, which include 15 altruistic donors. It is estimated that 13 living donor transplants have been cancelled due to Covid-19 impact up to 31st March 2020, which included those matched in the kidney sharing scheme. The living kidney programme is now suspended in Scotland and the rest of the UK until further notice.

Healthcheck Questionnaire Returns April 19- March 2020 (Glasgow & Edinburgh Tx Units)

