

Coronavirus: COVID-19 Information for transplant professionals 15th Edition, 14th August 2020

This document provides information about COVID-19 for transplant professionals and links to the latest information and resources from the NHS, Government and professional societies.

LATEST NEWS

Access recent publication: SARS-CoV-2 infection and early mortality of wait-listed and solid organ transplant recipients in England: a national cohort study, Ravanan R.; Callaghan C. et al; AJT, July 2020 at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ajt.16247>

Access NHSBT at <https://www.odt.nhs.uk/deceased-donation/covid-19-advice-for-clinicians/> for

- Updated guidance on reopening transplant centres
- Living donation survey: willingness to donate in the context of COVID-19 (July 2020)
- Covid Transplant Registry: reporting incidences and COVID cases map
- Latest COVID-19 Bulletins
- Daily donor and transplant report
- Transplant centre closures and restrictions
- Living and deceased donation guidance documents
- COVID-19 sampling videos

Access BTS at <https://bts.org.uk/information-resources/covid-19-information/> for latest

- Guidance on recipient and living donor consent in the context of COVID-19 (updated 14th August 2020)*
- Guidance on management of transplant recipients with COVID-19 (updated 9th July)*
- Resources for transplant trainees during COVID-19
- Webinars related to COVID-19
- Access to Transplant Library for emerging evidence in COVID-19
- COVID-19 related studies in progress

* full links included below

STANDING ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

1. **NHSBT/BTS** Guidance on recipient and living donor consent in the context of COVID-19 <https://bts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NHSBT-BTS-Consent-guidance-COVID-19-Version-4-updated-13th-August-FINAL.pdf>
2. **RA/BTS** Guidance on the management of transplant recipients with COVID-19 <https://bts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Clinical-management-of-transplants-and-immunosuppression-updated-9th-July.pdf>

3. **BTS/Herrick Society** Resources for transplant trainees
<https://bts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Transplant-trainees-advice.v2.pdf>
4. **NICE COVID 19 rapid guidelines:**
Arranging planned care in hospitals and diagnostic services at
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng179> (published 27th July)
Renal transplantation at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG178> (published 19th June, updated version awaited August 2020)
5. **UK Commissioning:** interim clinical commissioning policy: Remdesivir for patients hospitalised with COVID-19 (adults and children of 12 years and older) See also Guidance on the management of transplant recipients (see 2 above)
<https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewAndAcknowledgment/viewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103063>
6. **Government** latest information on COVID-19
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
7. **Government** advice for health professionals
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
8. **BTS/CET-Transplant Library** (open access): Emerging evidence on Covid 19 in solid organ donation and transplantation at <https://bts.org.uk/information-resources/covid-19-information/>
9. **Human Tissue Authority (HTA)**
 - Guidance for transplant centres considering using different premises at <https://www.hta.gov.uk/policies/guidance-transplant-centres-considering-using-different-premises>.
 - Guidance on consent requirements for living donation in the context of COVID-19
 - For Independent Assessors: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/independent-assessors>
 - For Living Donor Coordinators: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/living-donor-coordinators>
10. **Covid Symptom Tracker App** at <https://covid.joinzoe.com>

RECIPIENTS OF SOLID ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

There is some evidence to suggest that adult solid organ transplant recipients on immunosuppression are at increased risk of acquiring SARS- CoV-2 infection.

Transplant patients are advised to [follow national advice](#)

If patients suspect that they may have COVID-19, they should contact NHS 111.

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

- Patients who have symptoms or contact with COVID-19 patients are advised not to attend their GP, Emergency Department or transplant unit, as this increases the risk of spreading the virus further and putting other patients and staff at risk
- If a patient is diagnosed with COVID-19, it is recommended that the patient inform their transplant unit and they be monitored remotely during self-isolation. Any deterioration in condition should be referred back through NHS 111 for further evaluation
- Patients must be reminded not to stop their immunosuppression in the event of infection, unless recommended to do so by a transplant professional
- Patients returning from overseas must be managed in line with national advice, as above.

Patients diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19

Recommended management in line with [above guidance](#)

- Must be reported to NHS BT [here](#) to ensure that they are captured in the Covid Registry

REDUCING THE RISK TO PATIENTS

National guidance on [general hygiene](#) and use of [personal protection equipment \(PPE\)](#) must be followed at all times

The advice includes, regular handwashing, alcohol gel use, avoidance of touching your face and maintaining a personal distance at all times.

- Patients must avoid contact with other people who are unwell
- Trusts are advised to avoid placing patients with respiratory symptoms in similar clinical areas to transplant recipients
- Transplant recipients should be encouraged to follow the [national guidance on shielding](#), and to discuss their individual situation with the clinical team if they need further advice
- Comparable guidance is available for each of the other UK countries at the following links
 - Scotland latest advice [here](#)
 - Wales latest advice [here](#) (updated 12th June)
 - Northern Ireland latest advice [here](#)
- Specific advice for children and young people [here](#)
- Levels of immunosuppression should be reviewed but generalised immunosuppression reduction that may jeopardise organ function is not recommended
- Transplant units are advised to consider ways to limit hospital attendances for patients, such as:
 - rescheduling non urgent out-patient appointments
 - virtual or telemedicine appointments
 - home delivery of immunosuppression

ORGAN DONORS

- For latest guidance related to both living and deceased donation, refer to the information and guidance at <https://www.odt.nhs.uk/deceased-donation/covid-19-advice-for-clinicians/> Potential living donors must be assessed in line with GOV.UK and NHS BT policy to evaluate their risk of having COVID-19 – <https://bts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NHSBT-BTS-Consent-guidance-COVID-19-Version-4-updated-13th-August-FINAL.pdf>

ACUTE TRANSPLANTATION

There is no evidence-based guidance on the risk of acute transplantation during a viral outbreak.

- Transplant units need to be aware that public health measures and availability of critical care beds may pose restrictions on their ability to undertake organ transplants
- Recipients with active COVID-19 or recovering from an acute COVID-19 infection should not undergo transplantation
- The decision to undertake transplantation during the outbreak will need to be made on a case by case basis where the risk of infection at a time of peak immunosuppression must be balanced against the risk of organ failure or treatment of organ failure
Patients for transplantation must be counselled about the risks and benefits of each option – [guidance on consent](#)

- In the event of more widespread infection or reduced availability of resources for the care of recipients and/or living donors, a temporary suspension of acute transplant activities may be necessary.

REDUCING THE RISK TO STAFF

Staff are advised to follow latest advice and guidance and the recommended sources of NHS and Govt. information (above) to protect themselves and patients under their care.

Links to useful sources of information for recipients of solid organ transplants:

[Renal association](#)

[Kidney Care UK](#)

[Pregnancy and renal disease](#)

[British Liver Trust](#)

[British Association for the Study of the Liver](#)

[European Association for the Study of the Liver](#)

[International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation](#)

[BTS/Transplant Library emerging evidence on COVID 19](#)

Information correct as of **14th August 2020**. Please refer to the BTS website at www.bts.org.uk to ensure that you are using the latest update of this information