Safe supplies: A picture for policy
Joint working of NHS Blood and Transplant and Public Health England

Research and horizon scanning 2015

Diversity in HIV infected blood donors: NHSBT 2007-2015

167 HIV infected blood donors, HIV-1 genotype determined in 93 cases
11 different subtypes detected, type B most common

Subtype associated with reported transmission route

Underlying conditions in cases of chronic HEV: England & Wales 2009-2016, n=89

PHE aware of 89 cases of chronic* HEV infection
Most diagnosed since 2014 as awareness increased
Half of these are solid organ transplant recipients
Wide variety of immunosuppressed patients at risk of developing persistent HEV infection

*virus present for more than 12 weeks OR virus still present at point of treatment or death if before 12 weeks
Compliance: abiding by donor selection rules and answering the Donor Health Check as fully as possible

Compliance reduces the chances of people at risk of blood-borne viral infections donating with a recent infection that could be missed by testing

Compliance in UK blood donors is very high >99%

Top 4 reasons for non-compliance to rules on sexual behaviour or injecting

- low self-perception of risk
- donations are tested; don’t think rules are important
- wouldn’t be allowed to donate if disclosed
- embarrassment, lack of privacy

Horizon Scanning UK 2015

The Epidemiology unit produces a monthly horizon scanning list of emerging infections with potential to affect the UK blood and tissue supply (since 2007)

The Standing Advisory Committee on Transfusion Transmitted Infection (SACTTI) risk-assesses list

2015 Zika a new emerging threat

Pre 2014
- mild blood-borne viral infection
- 80% cases asymptomatic
- potential for transfusion transmission
- mainly Africa and Asia
- covered by existing blood service travel deferrals

2014
- First Zika virus transmission in the Americas (Easter Island)
- still seen as mild
- contained to an area without many UK travellers

2015
- First confirmation of Zika circulating in Brazil
- largest outbreak to date
- 13 countries in the Americas affected by end 2015
- evidence growing for severe outcomes in pregnancy
- many UK travellers with potential to become infected
- 28 day deferrals for affected areas put in place

Watching brief
- new affected areas not covered by deferrals
- importation to UK and Europe
- evidence for sexual transmission
- complications of infection

Data source: Blood Borne Virus Unit and data supplied to the NHSBT/PHE Epidemiology Unit by NHSBT, data from the UK Blood Donor Survey

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