IBMS Congress Abstract 2025- Transfusion Science

Authors

Heather Clarke and Helen Thom

Title- E-requesting and reporting of NHSBT reference tests – progress, challenges, next steps

Abstract

Transfusion 2024 outlined key priorities for enhancing patient safety through electronic requesting and reporting of pathology tests. This system facilitates structured, end-to-end order communications, integrating results directly into hospital Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) and thus improving the accuracy of information exchanged, reducing manual steps and the potential for transcription errors, saving time whilst improving the quality of healthcare delivery and patient experience.

After a successful fetal RHD screening pilot, NHSBT began onboarding additional Hospital Transfusion Laboratories (HTLs). The Transfusion 2024 project team created a database cataloguing hospitals, their LIMS and Electronic Patient Record (EPR) systems, and referral practices. A project dashboard was created to track progress.

Exceeding the 2024/25 goal of 30 live sites, the project is rapidly approaching the 2025/26 target of 65 sites.

This development has improved efficiency in HTL's and NHSBT laboratories by removing manual processes. This not only saves time but enables more accurate sample identification as the NHS number is mandated and the HTL sample barcode is used as a unique identifier, ensuring patient demographics are correct. The estimated date of delivery at the correct gestation is included, preventing rejections. E-requesting also allows auditable sample tracking, and using this process has reduced turnaround time of results.

Initially, only HTLs on or moving to Winpath Enterprise or EPIC were contacted to implement this functionality. Challenges included variability in LIMS configurability, delayed implementations and upgrades, process inefficiencies, lack of HTL project support, midwifery team delays, and confusion at NHSBT due to outdated information. Lessons learned have been shared and used to improve the implementation process.

Next steps include developing the functionality with other LIMS and EPR providers, and expanding to Red Cell Immunohaematology and Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics, meeting the objective for NHSBT to implement electronic requesting and reporting of pathology tests.