



Public Health  
England



Welsh Blood Service



**NHS**  
*Blood and Transplant*

Protecting and improving the nation's health

# The UK Blood Donor Survey OVERVIEW 2015

Prepared by the UK Blood Donor Survey Team  
- on behalf of the Steering Group, June 2015

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# Background

2011 review of UK donor selection criteria related to sexual behaviours

Compliance with ALL donor selection criteria important factor in risk-reduction

Long established surveillance systems for donors with markers of infection

BUT little known about behaviours in 'healthy' donors

Opportunity to ask donors about behavioural risks but also understanding of donor selection guidelines and whether they fully disclose information



# Questionnaire - online, unlinked & anonymous

**Donor Health Check for new and returning donors**

Please answer the following questions in blue or black ballpoint pen. If you are uncertain of any answer leave the box blank and speak in confidence to the nurse. Please do not write in red ink.

**A Your lifestyle** Yes No Staff

A1 Have you ever been given money or drugs for sex?

A2 In the last 12 months have you had sex with:

- a anyone who is HIV positive;
- b anyone who has had sex with someone who is HIV positive;
- c anyone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who is HIV positive;
- d anyone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who is HIV positive;
- e anyone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who has had sex with someone who is HIV positive;

A6 Male donors only, in the last 12 months have you had sex with a man who has ever had oral or anal sex with another man, with or without a condom?

A7 Female donors only, in the last 12 months have you had sex with a man who has ever had oral or anal sex with another man, with or without a condom?

**B Your health** Yes No Staff

B1 Have you ever been told that you should not give blood?

B2 Have you ever had a blood transfusion?

B3 Have you ever had a blood transfusion?

B4 Are you taking any medicine?

B5 In the last 12 months have you had any of the following conditions?

B6 In the last 12 months have you had any of the following conditions?

**C Risks of infection** DT code Yes No Staff

C1 In the last 2 weeks have you had any illness, infection or fever or do you think you have one now?

C2 In the last 4 weeks have you been in contact with anyone who has had any of the following conditions?

Additional risks

C7 Have you ever had jaundice or hepatitis?

C8 Have you received a blood transfusion since 1st January 1980?

C9 Has anyone in your family had CJD?

D3a Have you ever had malaria or an unexplained fever which you could have picked up while travelling?

D3b If 'yes' have you been outside the UK since then?

D4 Have you ever visited Central America or South America for a continuous period of more than 2 weeks?

**D Change of details** - If we have your details wrong, please give us the correct information below.

Title.....Forename.....Surname.....

Address.....

Postcode.....Home no.....Work no.....

Mobile.....Email.....Date of birth DD.MM.YYYY

Withdraw/suspend until:  At the end of this month  Medical Referral  Set medical bar

Accept

Date.....

CST/Donor Records signature.....

Additional notes label

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# Survey

## Development

- Focus group
- Pilots in 4 UK blood services

## Live survey

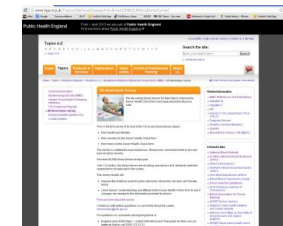
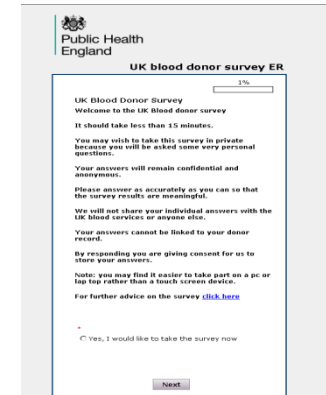
- November 2013
- Invited via email with URL to questionnaire + 2 reminders

## Information for donors

- PHE website
- [donorsurvey@phe.gov.uk](mailto:donorsurvey@phe.gov.uk)

## Information for staff

- Blood services
- Public Health agencies



# Sampling

Each month for one year, all eligible new and an equal number repeat donors from UK blood centres

## Eligible

- whole blood donation within previous month
- email address
- donation made at non-static site
- NOT reactive on testing

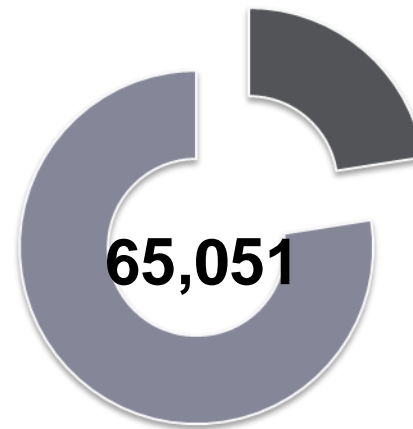
Estimated 60,000 participants (2011)

- fewer new donors → 3 x repeat donor sampling (NHSBT)

# Good participation

**225,091**

UK donors sent anonymous  
online survey  
Nov 2013-Oct 2014



**1 in 3**

responded

**90% completed whole survey**

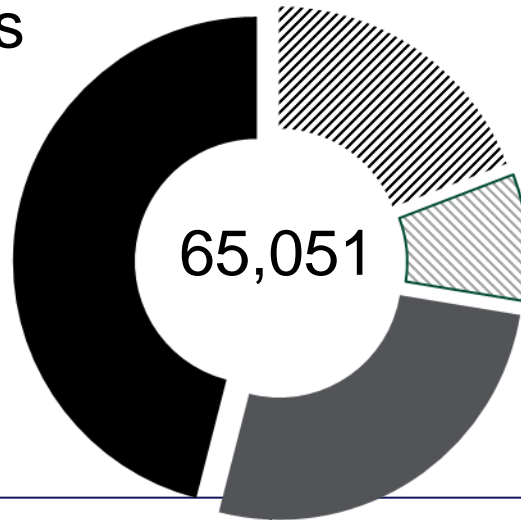
# Responders from range of subgroups

Repeat donors

30,205



17,280



New donors

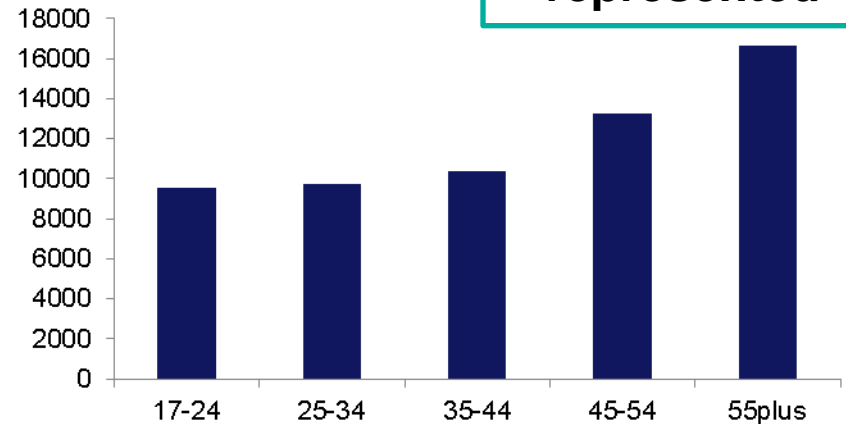
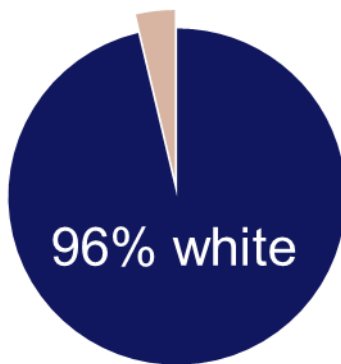
12,558



5,496



responders  
all donors  
9%  
Males, older, repeat donors  
**under-represented**



# Donors disclosed behaviours of a personal nature

## Sex

Responses - 63,311 (96.7%)

- 7 in 10 sex in last year
  - more common in males and young donors aged 17-24
- 2 in 10  $\geq$  1 new partner in the last year
- 1 in 10 history of a sexually transmitted infection

## Drugs

Responses – 62,157 (95.5%)

- 25 IDU
- 950 intranasal (most 25-34y)



# Compliance with the donor selection guidelines was very good

## Example – lifestyle deferrals

- exceeded 99% in each category
- small but significant difference between new and repeat donors in some cases
- lower rates of compliance among responders who did not understand the eligibility criteria or did not agree with the rationale for the selection criteria.

# MSM

22,065 males who have had sex

1% MSM 

74 were non-compliant (70 <12m)  
- 99.7% of all males COMPLIANT



# Other aspects of compliance and donor health

## Piercings & acupuncture

- Compliance > 99%

19,000 adverse events

>80% bruises  
2% delayed faint

- most not reported

2 in 3 travelled outside  
the UK < 12 months

- Compliance >99.7%

## Other stuff:

- Illness/medication/  
medical  
appointments
- Smoking/drinking
- 1 in 2 keep pets!

# Summary and next steps

Information of behaviour & lifestyle of > 65,000 donors

Compliance with donor selection guidelines was generally very high

Among those who did not comply, understanding & poor perception of own risk

Findings are limited to responding population – and there is reporting bias

Data about donor well-being still to be reviewed and compared with general population data

Due to report findings to UK Department of Health Expert Committee

- Key areas of interest – sex & drug use

Data will be fed back to each of the UK blood services to be used to support and develop blood donation policies

# ISBT 2015



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## FLYING IN THE FACE OF RISK: Do UK donors comply with travel deferrals for malaria?



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C Reynolds, K Davison, N Andrews, S R Brailsford on behalf of the UK donor survey steering group  
NHS Blood and Transplant / Public Health England



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## UK BLOOD DONOR ADVERSE EVENTS 2013/14



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Getting personal with UK blood donors – the findings of a large scale anonymous behavioural survey to assess understanding of, and compliance with, donor selection guidelines

K Davison, C Reynolds, N Andrews and S Brailsford on behalf of The UK Blood Donor Survey Steering Group

ADD AFFILIATIONS

“Highlights on donors’ nightlives” – findings on sexual behaviours from the UK blood donor survey

K Davison, C Reynolds, N Andrews and S Brailsford on behalf of The UK Blood Donor Survey Steering Group

ADD AFFILIATIONS

# Acknowledgements



Survey Team; Su Brailsford – Principal Investigator (NHSBT/PHE), Katy Davison & Claire Reynolds - Survey co-ordinators (NHSBT/PHE), Nick Andrews – Statistician (PHE)

Steering Group: Harpreet Kohli – Chair (SABTO until November 2014), Gail Mifflin NHSBT, Crispin Wickenden NHSBT, Felicity Hay (past NHSBT), Joanne Allan WBS, Stephen Field WBS, Moira Carter SNBTS, Kathryn Maguire NIBTS, John Ratchford PHE

Others: Andrew Reid SNBTS, David Moore NIBTS, Rhian Roberts WBS, Nicola Thomas WBS

Also Clive Seed, Australian Red Cross, for helpful guidance on the questionnaire

Teleperformance for distribution of the email invites from NHSBT AND THE DONORS!!

# Final thought from a donor...

“if eligibility issues  
were sorted out *beforehand*  
then the session experience  
would be  
*more motivational*,  
about donating blood  
rather than reasons **not to**”