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Implementation: To be determined by each Service

Change Notification UK National Blood Services No. 13 – 2007

Hepatitis C

Applies to the Whole Blood and Components Donor Selection Guidelines only.

1. Infection & documented past infection

Obligatory **Must not donate.**

See if Relevant Blood Safety Entry

2. Current sexual partners of HCV positive individuals

Obligatory **Must not donate.**

Discretionary If the donor reports that their HCV positive partner has been successfully treated for hepatitis C infection and has been free of therapy for twelve months and continues in sustained remission, accept.

See if Relevant Blood Safety Entry

Additional Information Confirmation of the success of treatment of the HCV positive partner is not required.

Reason for Change There is now sufficient evidence to establish that individuals who have a sustained virological response to treatment for hepatitis C infection (defined as remaining hepatitis C RNA negative six months after cessation of treatment) are likely to have been “cured” and that the chance of relapse is less than 1%.
(Data from the Pegasys Study presented at the 38th annual Digestive Disease Week Conference, Washington, USA, 21 May 2007 by M Shiffman et al [abstract ID #444])

In the United Kingdom sexual transmission of HCV from an infected individual to a sexual partner is low but not zero.



As the treated individual would have a very low (<1%) risk of relapse of infection and sexual transmission of the hepatitis C virus is rare, the transmission of hepatitis C from a successfully treated individual to a sexual partner is most unlikely.

All donations in the UK undergo HCV NAT screening, so that the chance of a window period donation escaping detection is also exceedingly low (current estimated residual risk for HCV from a UK blood donation is 1 in 30 million donations).

3. Former sexual partners of HCV positive individuals

Obligatory	Must not donate if: Less than 12 months from last sexual contact.
Discretionary	If less than 12 months from last sexual contact and the donor reports that their former HCV positive partner has been successfully treated for hepatitis C infection and has been free of therapy for twelve months and continues in sustained remission, accept.
See if Relevant	Blood Safety Entry
Additional Information	Confirmation of the success of treatment of the HCV positive partner is not required.

4. Person sharing home

Discretionary	Accept.
See if relevant	Sexual partners of HCV positive individuals above.
Additional Information	Hepatitis C is neither contagious nor spread by the faecal-oral route. It is usually only spread through a direct blood to blood route. For these reasons household contacts do not need to be deferred.

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