

Joint UKBTS Professional Advisory Committee (1)

Definition

Look Back and Trace Back

January 2015

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Look Back

A “Look back” is defined as an investigation on the fate of recipients of previously donated blood or blood components resulting from recognition that the donation may have presented a risk of transmission of infection. Look back will generally be required when a donor has undergone seroconversion, to exclude a previous window period donation, unless there is clear evidence that the previous donation could not have presented a risk to any recipient, and in other situations such as a newly recognised chronic, occult infection not previously detected through donation screening. The look back investigation would usually include retesting of any relevant archive samples held by the blood establishment. The Blood Establishment must also recall any unused components issued during the period of suspicion and quarantine/withdraw any existing stock.

Post transfusion infection investigation or Trace Back

A “Trace back” is defined as an investigation carried out by the Blood Establishment when they receive a report that a patient has been identified with a transfusion transmissible infection following the transfusion of blood or blood components. The investigation may necessitate the retesting of archive samples held by the Blood Establishment, and/ or the testing of follow-up blood samples obtained from the donor. The Blood Establishment must also recall any unused components issued during the period of suspicion and quarantine/withdraw any existing stock if any further tests will be required on donor/ donation samples.

(1) **Joint United Kingdom Blood Transfusion Services Professional Advisory Committee**