

Tips for improving attendance at HTC Meetings

A survey was carried out by the Transfusion Liaison Nurse within the south west, and other input received from colleagues in other regions, to identify those hospitals that consistently achieved high attendance by clinicians at their Hospital Transfusion Committees. The hospitals were asked to describe how they achieved this, and the following 'tips' were compiled from the responses.

- Engage senior trust management in the Trust and make the most of every opportunity to raise the profile of blood transfusion, for example via the Nursing and Midwifery Committee, Healthcare Governance Committee.
- Use the 'one to one', personal approach with key personnel. Emphasise the mutual benefits arising from the work of the HTC.
- Headhunt potential members.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Consider conducting a survey of HTC members opinions on how best to structure the meeting, and what to include that is relevant and important to them.
- Timing – meetings held at 08.00 or 17.00 generally tend to have a better attendance than those held midday. Ensure the meetings run to time and the agenda is followed where possible - many clinicians are hard pressed for time away from the clinical environment, and may choose only to come to a section of the agenda that is relevant to their practice. This is better than them not attending at all.
- In the HTC Minutes highlight specialties/members that do not attend, and / or identify them to the Chief Executive via the Clinical Governance Committee.
- Individually appeal to clinical leads or directorates, asking them to nominate a named person to attend (and a deputy if nominated person unavailable). Highlight why it is important that someone from their department attends. A regular departmental representative is better than no-one at all.
- Target transfusion performance figures of individual specialties, i.e. introducing an element of competition, by using audit data, etc. Make the meetings relevant for the clinical areas. Some members of the HTC may feel that meetings are not purposeful or productive, so the member does not see much point in attending – hence the need to focus as much of the meeting as possible on clinical issues.
- Take transfusion decisions affecting specialties even in their absence, and then if / when they object – point out that the decision has already been made by the HTC, it will stand and they should have been there in the first place.....

- If there are incidents / SHOT reports to be discussed, then invite the Directorate concerned to the meeting and ask them to feedback on their investigation findings and what actions have been put in place to prevent it happening again.
- Introduce an education element to meetings.
- Publicise the work of the HTC at every opportunity; for example at relevant trust events, educational meetings and clinical governance meetings.
- The Hospital Transfusion Team (HTT) may wish to offer to collaborate on local audits that are important to a clinical speciality, or are posing problems for the clinical area (obviously these should include transfusion issues). Input into this can help to gain credibility for the HTT and support for the committee.
- It seems that providing lunch etc. is no guarantee of a good attendance rate either. The best incentive seems to be getting specialties to take ownership of their blood use and get involved in the decision making.
- Provide HTC members with role descriptions which specify the required commitment.
- Regularly review who is on the committee, and do not be afraid to ask Directorates to nominate a fresh representative if the current one proves unreliable.
- Regularly review how meetings are run, their frequency, how decisions are made, use of alternative means of communication etc.
- If the going gets tough, remind yourself of what you have achieved:

Portfolio of policies
 MSBOS
 Alternatives to transfusion
 Overseeing training
 National and local audits
 Analysis of clinical incidents etc.

- Write an annual HTC Report and present it in person at senior committee levels.
- Talk to / invite the Director of Finance, who can provide a detailed financial perspective to the committee and the clinicians.