

Thursday, 29 January 2026

To: Hospital Transfusion Committee (HTC) chairs

Cc: Transfusion Practitioners, Consultant Haematologist Transfusion Leads, Transfusion Laboratory Managers

RE: Senior Student Assistantship Transfusion Training Programme

Dear Colleagues,

The Senior Student Assistantship Transfusion Training Programme ('SSA') is a well-structured, practical course for final year medical students in Wales, providing skills and knowledge in safe and appropriate transfusion since 2010. The facilitation and delivery of this programme has mainly been carried out by our Transfusion Practitioner colleagues (TPs) working collaboratively with the Blood Health Team since its inception.

The programme is consistently evaluated positively by the students, highlighting it to be extremely relevant to their upcoming clinical practice, particularly in areas such as;

- Clinical decision-making.
- Patient identification and safe sampling.
- Recognition and management of transfusion reactions.

The programme responds directly to the recommendations of the Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI), which call for comprehensive transfusion education to safeguard patient safety. Wales remains at the forefront of transfusion education in the UK, with other nations currently scoping undergraduate curricula, to standardise undergraduate transfusion education similarly to the SSA programme. Embedding these skills at the point of graduation through SSA helps to ensure future clinicians are prepared to deliver safe, evidence-based transfusion care. TPs and other members of the hospital transfusion team have always been pivotal to the successful delivery of SSA in each of the Health Boards (HBs) and are crucial to the longevity, sustainability and success of the programme to date.

We recognise the operational pressures across HBs and appreciate the effort involved in releasing staff to support the delivery of the SSA programme.



We are currently reviewing the SSA programme to explore options for a more sustainable delivery model that continues to meet the IBI's education recommendations. We do, however, acknowledge that these changes will not be in place for the delivery of SSA in May 2026. The programme will therefore run in its current format, with mitigations in place to ensure it can be delivered successfully.

To this end, we are writing to seek assurances that HBs will support the key members of staff required for a successful delivery of SSA in May 2026. For this to transpire, the relevant team members would need to be available to deliver the planned sessions within their HB and if the service allows to have the time and resources to be able to support other HB's.

Your continued support will ensure Wales remains a leader in transfusion education and patient safety.

Thank you for your commitment to this important work.

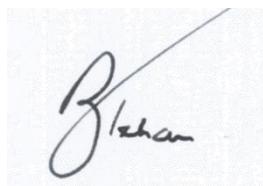
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sarah Beuschel'.

Sarah Beuschel

Transfusion Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB

Chair of the BHNOG Education Strategy Group



Dr Brian Tehan

BHNOG Chair

Endorsed by Blood Health National Oversight Group (BHNOG)

