Public Services Delivery
Scotland

Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service
The Jack Copland Centre
52 Research Avenue North
Heriot-Watt Research Park
Edinburgh
EH14 4BE
0345 90 90 999 (Donor Enquiries)
www.scotblood.co.uk

Date: 26th October 2026
Our Ref: FOI-2026-3530
Enquiries to Donor Medical Team
Extension 0131 314 5520
Email: NSS.SNBTSdcst@nhs.scot

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request and your interest in our service. I note your particular interest in iron deficiency without anaemia, the limitations of haemoglobin screening, and the evidence informing SNBTS policies on ferritin testing, iron supplementation and donors' long-term health.

SNBTS does not hold documentation addressing all your questions, but the issues you raise are widely discussed in international blood donation practice and research. I would be pleased to discuss these topics with you in more detail if this would be helpful. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss this further, please call our administration team on 0131 314 5520.

SNBTS selects and cares for donors in accordance with the UK Guidelines for Blood Transfusion and Tissue Transplantation Services, also known as 'The Red Book'. The Red Book guidelines can be accessed at https://www.jpac.org.uk/guidelines/

The Red Book recommends that haemoglobin (Hb) concentration should be determined each time a potential donor presents. To safeguard donor health and wellbeing, the Red Book has set conservative minimum haemoglobin thresholds above standard haemoglobin reference ranges. For whole blood donation, these are 125 g/L for female donors and 135 g/L for male donors. For plasmapheresis, the stated minimum is slightly lower because fewer red cells are lost during plasma donation. The thresholds for plasma donation are 120 g/L for female donors and 130 g/L for male donors.

Supplementing the Red Book guidelines, the SNBTS policy for Haemoglobin and Full Blood Count Testing for Platelet Donors requires donors whose haemoglobin falls by 5 g/L or more over three consecutive attendances to be referred to a Donor Clinical Support Officer (DCSO) for further review, even if their Hb remains within the normal range.

Please find below a list of a SNBTS documents which are relevant to your request. I have included screenshots of NATS MED 008, a digital toolkit containing decision trees for donor selection assessments.

Chair Mr Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Professor Karen Reid

Public Services Delivery Scotland is the common name of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service

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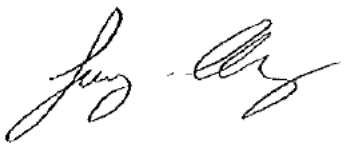
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NHS SCOTLAND

Document Reference	Title	Document Type
NATP DON 13 002	Policy on Haemoglobin and Full Blood Count Testing for Platelet Donors	Policy
NATP DON 07 007	Policy on Management of Donors Failing the Pre-Whole Blood Donation Haemoglobin Screen	Policy
NATS COL 060 07	Session Management of Donors Failing Pre-Whole Blood Donation Haemoglobin Screening	Standard Operating Procedure
NATL 017	SNBTS High Haemoglobin Leaflet	Donor Information Leaflet
NATL 018	SNBTS Low Haemoglobin Leaflet	Donor Information Leaflet
NATL 020	Giving blood: Process, risks and information	Donor Information Leaflet
NATS MED 008	Haemoglobin results- Platelet Donation	Screenshot of digital donor management 'toolkit'
NATS MED 008	Plasmapheresis: Haemoglobin and FBC results	Screenshot of digital donor management 'toolkit'
NATS MED 008	Haemoglobin results: Whole Blood	Screenshot of digital donor management 'toolkit'

Please feel welcome to contact me if I can help further.
Thank you once again for your interest in our service.

Best wishes,



Dr Faye McCleery
Clinical Lead for Blood Donation

Chair Mr Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Professor Karen Reid

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