

News story: New rules on blood donation come into force

Changes to the rules on blood donation in England come into force on 28 November. The new rules will allow more people to donate blood, without affecting the safety of the blood supply.

[The changes were announced in July, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs \(SaBTO\).](#)

Dr Gail Mifflin, Medical and Research Director at NHS Blood and Transplant said:

The SaBTO review took into account the latest available medical and scientific evidence. This included more information about the risk of acquiring infections that can be passed on in blood, more evidence on how well donors comply with our guidelines and also more evidence that supports the reliability of the blood screening tests we use.

We have one of the safest blood supplies in the world. Anyone may require a blood transfusion in the future and so it's in all our interests to ensure that we work hard to keep blood safe for patients.

Before every donation, all donors must complete a Donor Health Check and have a private health screening where they may be asked confidential questions based on their completed form.

Subject to meeting the other donation rules, the following groups will now be able to donate after 3 months have passed since the last sexual activity:

- men who have had sex with another man
- commercial sex workers
- people who have had sex with a partner at high risk of having a sexually transmitted infection

Previously, commercial sex workers were permanently excluded from blood donation and the other groups had to wait until 12 months had passed before they could donate. The rules are now consistent for all groups that are deferred due to sexual behaviours.