

Post-Thaw Clinic:

Boosting Cord Utilisation by Supporting Clinical Teams

Phoebe Groves¹, Roger Horton¹, Claire Simpson¹, Sophie Macleod¹, Alexandra Ross², Kennedy Davies², Benjamin Cash², Irina Evseeva¹
¹Anthony Nolan, UK; ²NHSBT, UK

Introduction

The Cord Support Programme (CSP) has been run for UK Transplant Centres (TCs) by Anthony Nolan (AN) and NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) for 5 years. CSP supports TCs in Cord Blood Unit (CBU) selection and quality assessment as well as providing training and on-site assistance. To maintain and grow utilisation, further development of CSP services was needed to support and improve TC experience and confidence with cord.

Objectives

To develop and implement a new service to help TCs with assessing complicated post-thaw data as an enhancement of CSP's existing suite of offers.

Methods

The Post-Thaw Clinic (PTC) worked via a dedicated inbox manned by AN Registry operational staff; TCs submitted post-thaw data and quality queries to a panel of 5 experts from AN and NHSBT Cord Blood Banks (CBBs) for next-day holistic assessment of data to determine CBU suitability (Figure 1). The final decision remained with the Clinical Teams at the TCs. Customer feedback, national usage of CBUs and AN CBB utilisation rate were monitored.

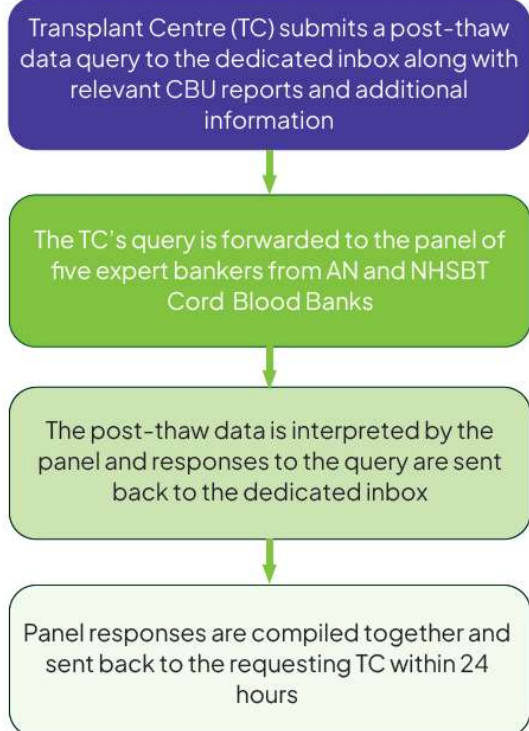


Figure 1. The Post-Thaw Clinic Process

References
 Horgan, C et al. (2023). T-cell replete cord transplants give superior outcomes in high-risk and relapsed/refractory pediatric myeloid malignancy. *Blood Advances* 7(10):2155-2165. doi: 10.1182/bloodadvances.2022009253

Results

100 queries for 79 patients were received by the PTC panel between April 2022 and May 2024. In 89% of cases progressing to workup, TCs took onboard the panel's advice proceeding with their initial CBU or an alternative graft.

CBU usage in the UK remained stable 2022-2024, providing an average of 9.8% of all stem cell products received.

AN CBB's utilisation rate saw 33% increase from 0.46% in April 2022 to 0.61% in May 2024. Its domestic market share increased from 11.3% in FY21/22 to 25.2% in FY23/24 (figure 2).

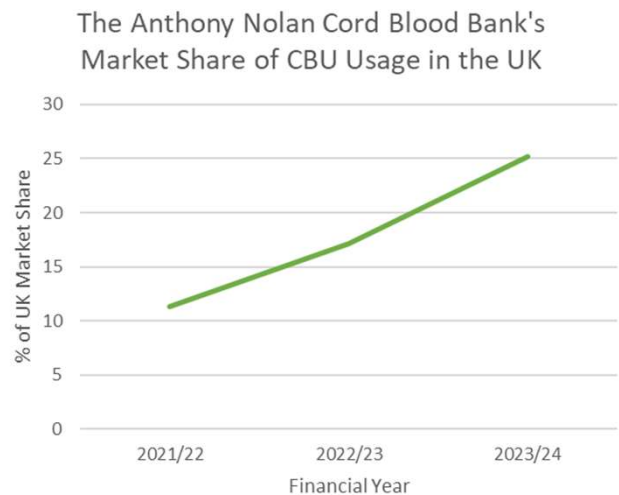


Figure 2. The Anthony Nolan Cord Blood Bank's market share of CBU usage in the UK has progressively grown year on year: FY21/22 to FY23/24.

Discussion

PTC has been well received by UK TCs. Through providing comprehensive support with CBU quality evaluation, banks make a difference by building confidence and relationships with domestic TCs. In further development, "ask an expert transplanter" was launched in April 2024, facilitating TCs sending clinical queries to clinicians who transplant high volumes of CBUs.

This collective effort between registry and banks has resulted in stable CBU usage in the UK despite international trends of decline, supported national bank utilisation and played a vital role in supporting increased interest alongside recently published striking data (Horgan et al, 2023).