



## Report on informal consultation on the EU Optimal Blood Use Manual

[www.optimalblooduse.eu](http://www.optimalblooduse.eu)

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## **1. Introduction**

The EU Optimal Blood Use (OBU) project ran between 2007-2010.

The Optimal Blood Use Manual is a resource for improving safety and effectiveness of the clinical transfusion process.

We wanted to find out how the manual was used, if it was still useful and whether it needed to be revised or expanded.

## **2. Methodology**

Contributors and other stakeholders to the EU Optimal Blood Use Manual project were contacted via email on the 21 May 2013. Instead of taking answers through an online survey, recipients were simply asked to answer three questions by replying to the email.

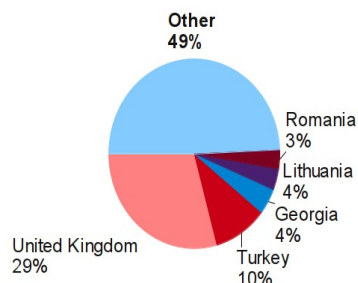
- Has the Manual been useful?
- Is it still being used?
- Should it be revised or developed further?

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Recipients

A total of 145 emails reached their destination. As of 12 June 2013, at least 73 (50%) recipients opened the email, 41 (28%) clicked through to the OBU website and 27 (19%) replied. Counting repeat access, the email was opened nearly five hundred times throughout Europe (fig 1)

Opened emails by country



Base: all 452 times the email was opened, including multiple opens.

Figure 1: The email was accessed repeatedly by an international audience.

#### 3.2 International reach

Replies came in from the following European countries: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, France, Ireland, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Some recipients indicated involvement in promoting the OBU manual in Ghana, Kuwait, Russia and other Eastern and Central European countries.

#### 3.3 Usefulness of the manual

A majority of respondents felt the manual was very useful (fig 2). Some of the comments provided by respondents were:

“Extremely useful. It is very clear, concise and well written, full of excellent authoritative advise.”

“Big help for our doctors.”

“Valuable reference manual.”

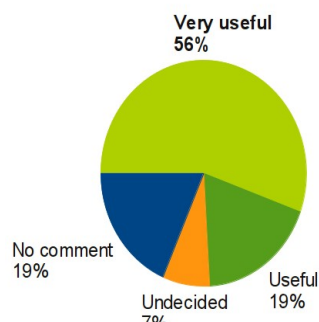
“Very important and useful.”

“Well received at conferences in eastern and central Europe.”

“An extraordinary tool I have found it for introducing practices and policies in Clinical transfusion in the centres for which I am responsible .”

“A very useful tool to every practitioner.”

Is the manual useful?



Base: classification of all 27 freetext responses.

Figure 2: Most recipients felt the OBU manual was very useful.

“I like it very much – easy to read, understand and has useful information.”

“The information is full and really useful, complete with figures. So it is easy to use in the practical work.”

The most useful chapters are those on Implementation of Quality Management and on training in clinical transfusion practice

### 3.4 Revision and expansion

Most respondents did not comment on whether the manual needed to be revised. This could be interpreted as an indication that it is still relatively accurate and up to date. Of those who commented, opinion was split fairly equally.

New chapters on electronic ordering, local indicator checking, blood patient management and ethics were suggested. One respondent felt the chapter on blood components should be expanded, using the Handbook of Transfusion Medicine as a starting point. A separate manual specifically for blood establishments was requested by a couple of respondents, covering topics such as validation processes and look-back procedures.

Several respondents requested translations into Russian, Romanian and Turkish.

### 3.5 Use of the manual

Feedback from respondents indicate that the OBU manual is most often used for education and training purposes (fig. 4). This included as part of lectures series, online learning resource repositories and dissemination at conferences.

Respondents also said that the manual had helped them make and justify organisational changes to improve quality. Another common use of the manual was as a reference, to look up a specific questions. For example details on blood components.

Should the manual be revised?

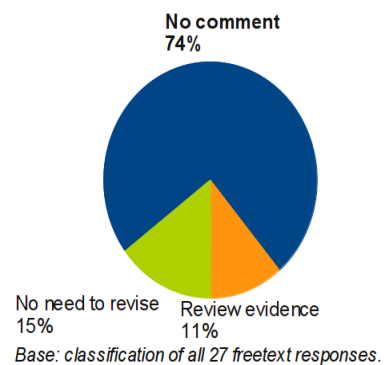


Figure 3: The case for revising the manual is unconvincing.

How is the manual used?

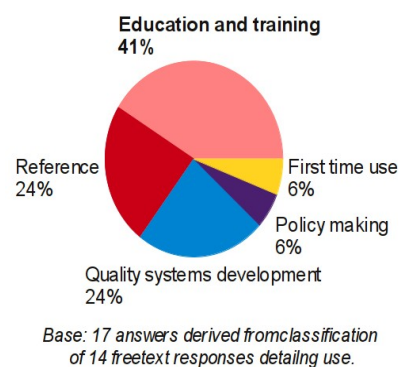


Figure 4: The manual is used to support education and training.

### 3.6 In what contexts are the manual used?

The manual has several audience and is used in many different situations (Fig. 5). It is problematic to categorise this due to inconsistent terminology and fluid boundaries. However, it is clear that an important user group are national and regional transfusion services, all the way down to Hospital Transfusion Boards. The manual appears to be used in clinical practice in hospitals, although in one case it was not.

Hospital blood banks and blood establishments constitute another user group. This is surprising as the manual is more geared toward clinical practice, but perhaps explained by the lack of a similar manual for blood establishments (see above).

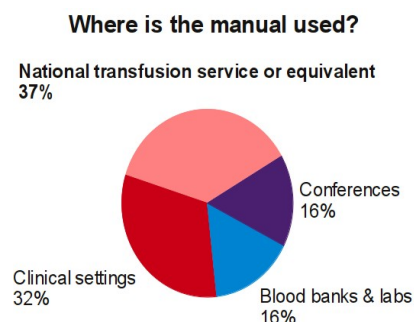
Finally, a number of respondents indicated that the manual was used in conferences such as in meetings of national blood transfusion societies.

### 4 Comment

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond!

The results are very encouraging, especially because the website has not been updated since the end of the funded project in 2010. We are now exploring ways of developing the Manual guided by continued feedback from users, including the following points:

- A Romanian translation is needed and a volunteer has offered to do this.
- A Russian translation is needed, including for former Soviet countries.
- A section should be added on the ethics of Optimal Blood use.
- A section should be added on computerised ordering systems with information on approved indications for transfusion.



*Base: 19 answers derived from classification of 16 freetext responses detailing location.*

*Figure 5: The manual is used across different contexts.*