

## **APPENDIX III**

### **Essential requirements for Transfusion Pathology Networks**

This is an appendix showing some essential requirements for working in networks. With the advocate of NHSi and the formation of more pathology networks, the use of IT to link laboratories at different sites and within previously different organisation is becoming more important.

All laboratories sharing a single copy of the LIMS will mean electronic communications between sites will be straightforward and more easily implemented. It is however, recognised that this may not be possible the change of the LIMS is a complex process and not without cost implications.

There may be no alternative but to have individual LIMS systems. The connectivity between systems must be addressed and made to be as seamless as possible, technical documentation must be in place to ensure safe working.

A minimum standard would be:

- a) Use of NHS or unique patient number across the entire network.
- b) Systems in place to ensure historical patient specialist requirements and antibody histories are visible across all LIMS systems.
- c) Communication links to enable a sample to be processed in any laboratory and the results to be made available centrally.

- d) System to permit recent transfusion episodes and pregnancies to influence the sample validity on all sites.
- e) Blood availability and traceability to be visible across all sites.

The use of a standardised digital exchange service (such as NPEX or equivalent) will enable laboratories to work to as a network to the minimum standard but should not replace the need for harmonisation of the LIMS.