

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Online Training Delivers Shot in Arm to Alternative Blood Transfusion Technique

The National Blood Transfusion Committee and the Appropriate Use of Blood Group have given the green light for a new e-learning course training hospital staff in an alternative to donor blood transfusions to be rolled out nationally, across the NHS. This means a life-saving blood transfusion technique called Intra-Operative Cell Salvage (ICS), will become more widely available and save the NHS potentially millions of pounds.

ICS is a welcome substitute for donor blood transfusion, because it uses a patients' own blood. Any blood lost during surgery is collected, cleaned and returned to the patient, so risks to his or her health through transfusion related infections or adverse reactions are minimised. The process can be used for a wide range of surgical procedures; it eliminates the need to store blood before transfusion and indirectly helps conserve dwindling donor blood supplies. Jehovah's Witnesses, who reject conventional donor blood transfusions, are able to accept ICS.

Trent area hospital consultants developed the ICS e-learning course in association with specialist e-learning providers Course-Source, piloting the course at University Hospital Leicester, the Derby City Hospital, Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham and the Main and Children's Hospitals in Sheffield.

The ICS e-learning course delivers preliminary training covering basic blood facts; the need for alternatives to donor transfusion; blood conservation strategies; and how the ICS process and equipment works. Delivering this learning online means far more people can be trained than using conventional methods, and nurses, surgeons and anaesthetists can prepare for subsequent classroom and in-theatre training at their own pace, in a practical, cost effective way.

The project was overseen by a committee called TACTICS (Training, Assessment and Competency in Trent Intra-operative Cell Salvage). Laurence Wilson, a TACTICS member and corporate trainer who took responsibility for devising the coursework says: "Conventional classroom training for the numbers of people involved would have compromised theatre schedules and waiting lists. We realised e-learning was the way forward but needed to access the technology to put the training course on line. We also needed a tracking system to evaluate usage and results for both legal and insurance reasons and to assess the overall effectiveness of the pilot project."

The TACTICS committee chose Course-Source on the basis of the company's track record within the NHS, providing the Learning Management System underpinning delivery of the NHS European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) training to over 100,000 users nationwide.

"Course-Source were brilliant," says Laurence Wilson. "They took my material and suggested changes to make training more user-friendly. Feedback on the training course was excellent and so were the results; people have clearly learnt what they needed to learn on the e-learning course and have performed well in subsequent classroom and theatre tests."

When rolled out throughout the country, ICS training could help save the NHS money. One TACTICS member reports that use of ICS during the pilot period produced the equivalent of 450 blood units, representing a saving of around £20,000.

Mike Leeson, Sales Director of Course-Source, says: "Course-Source is pleased to have made a contribution to this alternative clinical training requirement within the NHS. I believe our previous experience of working within the NHS helped ensure the course was implemented successfully. Throughout the pilot we've maintained a flexible approach that helped TACTICS get the results necessary for the National Blood Transfusion Committee and the Appropriate Use of Blood Group to see the benefits of rolling out the project nationally."

-ENDS -

A photograph of ICS in use in the operating theatre is attached. For further information or to arrange interviews with those involved in the ICS pilot, please contact Suzanne Evans at Suzanne Evans Communications, PR Consultant to Course-Source, on 020 8687 0173 or 07973 149104.

Email [suzanne@suzanne-evans.co.uk](mailto:suzanne@suzanne-evans.co.uk)