

Annual emerging infection surveillance report for 2024

January 2025

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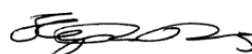
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Report prepared by

- Niamh O’Flaherty, Clinical Deputy Chair, SACTTI
- Kate Tettmar, Scientific Deputy Chair, SACTTI
- Ines Ushiro-Lumb, Chair, SACTTI



Dr Ines Ushiro-Lumb
Chair of Standing Advisory Committee on
Transfusion Transmitted Infection (SACTTI)



Dr Stephen Thomas
Professional Director of JPAC

Document purpose

The following report summarises the infectious disease surveillance work conducted in 2024 by the Standing Advisory Committee on Transfusion Transmitted Infection (SACTTI). This activity is aimed at monitoring for emerging and re-emerging infections which hold potential risk of transmission through substances of human origin (SoHO) and assessing them for necessary action.

Key points of interest

- Dengue virus (DENV) activity, leading to autochthonous transmission in mainland Europe, required close monitoring and frequent changes to travel-related deferrals and risk assessment involving Italy, Spain and France (changes in the Geographic Disease Risk Index; GDRI). Globally, there was a very significant surge in numbers of cases diagnosed; most reports were from the Americas, but dengue incidence has also increased in Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean.
- Oropouche virus (OROV) caused significant outbreaks in 2022-2023, expanding rapidly from the Brazilian Amazon basin area to previously unaffected areas within the country as well as other Latin American countries; small number of imported cases have been diagnosed in Europe and in the United States (US). The link with vertical transmission and poor pregnancy outcomes had not been observed until now and is undergoing research. OROV will remain under scientific investigation and close epidemiological monitoring.
- In 2024, Mpox virus clade 1 emerged outside the five Central African Regions where it was previously known to circulate. Cases were described for the first time in several countries outside Africa, including in the UK (five confirmed cases in 2024); they were associated with travel to highly endemic countries or close intra-household contact, with no evidence of spread outside these scenarios.
- Increased activity of zoonotic Influenza A (H5N1) was seen in 2024 in the US. Besides wild birds and poultry, outbreaks in dairy cattle and other wild mammals were of particular concern. The small number of human cases (70 confirmed in the US) were all linked to animal exposure, with very mild disease (one death). In the UK, where the currently circulating variant is different to the one present in the US, only one human case was described in 2024; it was also associated with heavy exposure to poultry. Enhanced surveillance and monitoring of viral spread and evolution is in place in the UK and internationally, and risk of human-to-human spread remains slow.
- Other arthropod-borne infections continued to raise frequent alerts:
 - Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) clusters were reported in the Middle East with isolated cases in Europe.
 - *Babesia* remained a pathogen of interest but in contrast to the US, there was an absence of documented transfusion-transmitted babesiosis.
 - Tick-borne encephalitis virus (TBEV) was the focus of a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) report specifically addressing the risk of transmission through SoHO; they concluded that the level of risk remains low, but the need for continued research and monitoring.
 - The potential establishment of Usutu virus (USUV) in UK birds and mosquitos remained under review. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is conducting a study in this area, and results should provide further information for our risk assessments

Methodology of surveillance and assessment of potential infectious risks

The structure of the surveillance process is centred on a monthly online meeting to review Emerging Infections Reports (EIR) compiled by the NHS Blood and Transplant/UKHSA Epidemiology Unit. The JPAC Position Statement 'Surveillance: Preparedness for Emerging Infectious Agents' describes the processes in place to review the EIRs, data analysis, risk rating, and mechanisms to trigger necessary actions.

All necessary changes to the GDRI are executed through the Chair of SACCSD with whom the Chair of SACTTI closely liaises throughout the year.

EIR meetings are attended by the SACTTI Chair and Secretary, and a SACTTI member with expertise in organ donation safety. From October 2024, a blood safety senior scientist (NHSBT/UKHSA Epidemiology Unit) and newly appointed Deputy Scientific and Deputy Clinical SACTTI Chairs joined the group.

The team reviews each spreadsheet file entry in the EIR as to the need for further review, comment and/or action, according to a 'traffic-light' system (see Table 1).

Actions may include:

- the requirement for SACTTI to perform a risk assessment
- changes to the GDRI based on patterns of transmission of specific infectious agents (e.g. start and end of outbreaks, spread to new areas)
- additional information to be sourced for SACTTI discussion or action
- monitoring for additional reports and data

Summary of activities

In 2024, 952 individual EIR entries were reviewed. A collection of illustrative entries, with the outcome of the monthly review is presented in Appendix 1.

The agents of interest mirrored previous years with a predictable and ongoing need to defer donors returning from an increasing number of French, Italian and (to a lesser extent) Spanish regions affected by clusters of autochthonous DENV transmission during the European 'mosquito season'. Indeed, arboviruses accounted for a significant proportion of EIR meeting activity and discussion, as West Nile Virus (WNV) and TBEV also expanded their geographical range of autochthonous transmission in Europe. WNV is controlled through deferral and testing, while TBEV remains under monitoring and surveillance by SACTTI, other blood safety surveillance groups (e.g. the European Blood Alliance [EBA] Emerging Infectious Disease Monitor [EIDM] working group) and Public Health authorities in the UK and in Europe.

In 2025, the group will maintain vigilance for new or re-emerging pathogens and continue with a similar methodology but will also consider changes that have the potential to increase efficiency, particularly in view of the growing numbers of entries that require revision throughout the year.

Oropouche virus (OROV)

OROV is an arthropod-borne virus that has caused outbreaks of Oropouche fever in South America and the Caribbean since the 1950s. Notably, there was a significant upsurge in Latin America, which expanded beyond its previous zone of endemicity (Amazon basin) to cause outbreaks in Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Cuba; a small number of imported cases have been diagnosed in Europe. The basis for the re-emergence of OROV and potential change in pathogenicity are being intensively investigated, with

particular attention to the consequences of OROV infection during pregnancy. Developments will continue to be closely monitored in 2025.

Mpox

The emergence and spread of clade 1a and clade 1b Mpox was kept under monthly review in 2024, and the associated Position Statement was reviewed, with no need to change safety measures. Current eligibility criteria are deemed sufficient to mitigate the potential threat of Mpox to blood safety. Clade 1 is no longer considered a high consequence infectious disease (HCID) given the safety and efficacy of available vaccines, and low morbidity.

Influenza A (H5N1) virus

The rapid geographic spread of Influenza A (H5N1) virus in the US, affecting poultry, wild birds, and other mammalian hosts, including humans, raised concerns worldwide in 2024. SACTTI actions in this regard included liaison with infectious disease and blood safety experts in the UK and US and an update to the risk assessment and Position Statement on zoonotic Influenza A. There is currently no evidence of transfusion or sustained human-to-human transmission.

Malaria

Malaria accounted for a significant number of the EIRs reviewed in 2024. Ahead of World Malaria Day in April, the UKHSA published data showing an increase in travel-related malaria diagnosed in the UK with reported cases exceeding 2000 for the first time since 2001. There was a probable case of transfusion-transmitted malaria infection in 2023 in England which was noted previously.

Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF)

Viral haemorrhagic fever outbreaks linked to Ebola virus (EBOV), Sudan virus and Marburg virus continued to occur in the African continent in 2024. The risk of exposure to these filoviruses is controlled by permanent exclusion of affected donors and their partners, as well as time-limited geographical deferrals during outbreaks

Nipah virus

Nipah virus had a number of EIR entries throughout 2024 and although there was no action for SACTTI, this will continue to be monitored in 2025. There have been regional outbreaks across Asia, and the World Health Organization (WHO) currently assesses the national risk in the affected countries, such as Bangladesh, to be moderate due to the severity of disease and limitation of available treatment. WHO assesses the risk at a global level to be low as there have been no confirmed cases outside of Bangladesh, India, Malaysia and Singapore.

Tables

Table 1: Colour key to the analysis of entries in the EIRs

Risk assessment	Colour	Decision/action
Very low	White	No further action No further action required at this time beyond the formal recording of the analysis and any subsequent recommendations for further or on-going review
Likely very low and/or insufficient information at this time	Grey	Minor changes to GDRI If new infectious agent, maintain awareness and gather additional information before taking any other action.
Low	Green	No specific additional action at this time Maintain awareness
Potential risk	Amber	Potential risk present Although a potential risk, the reports are currently either ad-hoc cases or increasing spread of known risk. Close watching brief for changes in incidence and spread of infectious agent. Ongoing review of the situation, which may be dealt with in the first instance by the Professional Director of JPAC and chairs of relevant SACs, but which may subsequently require action from SACTTI.
Potential risk	Red	Risk present Risk present and a full SACTTI risk assessment is required, together with possible immediate action. SaBTO involvement may be required. If immediate action is required, this to be discussed initially between Professional Director of JPAC and the Chairs of relevant SACs.
n/a	Blue	Relevant for organ donation.

Table 2A: EIRs with SACTTI actions

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
January	Chikungunya	Argentina	In Argentina, media reported that there was a record number of chikungunya cases in 2023, with 2,354 cases reported, mostly autochthonous (less than 15% of these were confirmed as imported).	Action: Inform Chair of SACCS D to add CHIKV to GDRI for Argentina (not urgent as other TV risk applied).
January	Dengue	Africa	Since 1 January and as of 20 January 2024, a total of 712 cases (105 confirmed; 607 suspected) were reported from 4 African Union Member States: Ethiopia (295), Mali (368), Mauritius (40) and Sao Tome and Principe (9).	Action: Inform Chair of SACCS D to add DENV to Egypt, Guinea and Nigeria; urgent for Egypt as does not have other TV risk applied.
January	Malaria	Cape Verde	The WHO has certified Cabo Verde as a malaria-free country.	Action: Inform SACCS D chair as malaria flag can be removed from Cape Verde.
February	Dengue	Mali	The dengue fever outbreak in Mali continues. Since the last report containing data to 12 November 2023, 2,771 new suspected and 479 confirmed cases, including 28 new deaths, have been reported.	Action: Add Zika to the GDRI (not urgent as other TV risk applied).
February	Dengue	Tokelau	As of 23 January 2024, the Tokelau Health Department has recorded 130 dengue fever cases since an outbreak began on 9 December 2023.	Action: Add Dengue to the GDRI (not urgent as other TV risks applied).
February	Zika virus	Mali	On 6 December 2023, the Ministry of Health of Mali reported 12 cases (no deaths) of Zika virus disease confirmed by RT-PCR.	Action: Add Zika to the GDRI (not urgent as other TV risks applied).
March	Dengue	Chile	In Chile, as of 23 March 2024 (EW 12), 16 confirmed autochthonous cases of dengue were identified on Easter Island, where no cases had been recorded since 2020.	Action: Inform Chair of SACCS D to add DENV to Chile; not urgent as other TV risk applied.
April	Parvovirus B19	Europe	ECDC Assessment: Two-thirds of the adult population are expected to be immune to parvovirus B19 due to prior infection	For B19 risk assessment.
April	Influenza A (H5N1)	Europe	A human case of HPAI A(H5N1) has been reported in the US with previous exposure to presumably infected cattle. The US CDC assesses the risk to the general public as low.	For H5N1 risk assessment.

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
May	Malaria	Costa Rica	On 07 June 2024, media highlighted that Costa Rican authorities have reported 177 cases of malaria so far in 2024.	Action: Inform Chair of SACCSO to add malaria to Costa Rica; not urgent as other TV risk applied.
May	WNV	India	The Kerala State Government is reporting 9 confirmed cases of West Nile virus (WNV), 16 suspected cases and 2 suspected deaths in May 2024; and 1 additional confirmed case and 4 additional suspected cases cumulatively in 2024.	Action: Inform Chair of SACCSO to consider WNV to India; not urgent as other TV risk applied.
May	Prion	International	Classical BSE dismissed as the cause of CWD in Norwegian red deer despite strain similarities between both prion agents	For next prion risk assessment.
June	Dengue	USA	On 25 June 2024, the US CDC issued a Health Alert Network Health Advisory to its stakeholders about the increased risk of dengue virus infections in the USA for 2024.	Continue to monitor and follow what is done locally in Florida.
June	Dengue	UAE	During 2023, locally acquired cases of dengue were confirmed within the United Arab Emirates [No tropical deferral in GDRI, or current malaria]	Inform the chair of SACCSO. Add dengue to UAE.
June	WNV	Senegal	One new confirmed West Nile virus case was reported from the Thiès Region, Senegal.	Continue to monitor
June	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	North Macedonia	On 7 June 2024, media reported that North Macedonia Institute of Public Health (PHI) has reported 3 laboratory-confirmed cases of CCHF in North Macedonia from 26 April up to 4 June 2024.	To be noted in CCHF risk assessment.
June	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	Russia	On 18 June 2024, media reported a case of CCHF in Peschanokopsky district, Russia.	To be noted in CCHF risk assessment.
June	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	Spain	On 27 April 2024, the Castile and León Ministry of Health reported a confirmed case of CCHF in Salamanca province, Castile-León, north-western Spain.	To be noted in CCHF risk assessment.
June	Mpox	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Sustained Human Outbreak of a New MPXV Clade I Lineage in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mpox risk assessment updated to include MPXV clade I situation.

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
July	Dengue	United Arab Emirates	On 24 July 2024, media reported that the has been experiencing an uptick in imported and locally acquired dengue cases.	ACTION: Informed the chair of SACCSD. Dengue flag to be added for Iran.
August	WNV	Armenia	On 23 August 2024, media reported the number of West Nile virus cases in Armenia has increased to 75 confirmed cases in 2024.	Action: SACCSD informed that WNV risk should be applied to Armenia
August	WNV	Ukraine	Media reported 17 human cases and 3 associated deaths due to West Nile virus in Kyiv, Ukraine since 1 June 2024.	Action: GDRI will need to be updated although unlikely travel destination at the moment
August	Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE)	USA	On 26 August 2024, media reported that ten communities in Massachusetts, US are responding to a recent case of EEE by shutting down public parks and restricting outdoor activities in the evening when mosquito activity is at its peak.	Action: Continue to monitor case numbers
August	Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE)	USA	Eastern equine encephalitis in USA: As of 29 August 2024, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) announced a second confirmed case of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) in a human and a second confirmed case in a horse since the beginning of 2024.	Action: Continue to monitor case numbers
August	Mpox	Europe	Outside of the African region, 2 imported cases have been detected in Sweden (15 August 2024) and Thailand (22 August 2024)	Action: Mpox position statement reviewed August 2024. No additional measures required.
August	Mpox	Malta	On 30 August 2024, Malta's Ministry of Health announced the country's first case of mpox. The clade of the mpox virus has not yet been identified. The case was imported (location not stated) and was sexually transmitted	Action: Mpox position statement reviewed August 2024. No additional measures required.
August	Mpox	Sweden	On 15 August 2024, health authorities in Sweden reported a confirmed case of Clade I MPXV in Stockholm. This is the first confirmed Clade I MPXV case reported in Europe, and outside of the African continent.	Action: Mpox position statement reviewed August 2024. No additional measures required.
August	Mpox	UK	Up to 31 August 2024, since 2023, a total of 326 cases of mpox have been reported in the UK.	Action: Mpox position statement reviewed August 2024. No additional measures required.
August	Mpox	DRC	Since the last update on 9 August 2024, 672 new mpox cases (90 confirmed, 582 suspected) and 22 deaths have	Action: Mpox position statement reviewed August 2024. No additional measures required.

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
			been reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).	
August	Oropouche virus	Americas	The number of reported Oropouche virus disease has increased in the WHO Region of the Americas, including in areas with no previously recognized history of Oropouche virus	Action: Partial malaria and/or tropical virus risk mitigation. Continue to monitor case numbers
August	Dengue	France	On 22 August 2024, media reported the detection of 10 dengue cases in Sainte-Cécile-les-Vignes (Vaucluse), France.	Dengue risk areas in France expanded in GDRI. See JPAC CN No. 44 - 2024
September	Dengue	Italy	25 cases were locally acquired.	Action: Information as of 21/10/2024, Marche 136 cases, Emilia Romagna 36 cases, Lombardy 10 cases, Abruzzo 8 cases, Tuscany 2 cases, Veneto 1 case. Discussed with Chair of SACCSO 10/10/2024; Dengue risk to be applied Modena province, Emilia-Romagna (35/36 cases).
September	Influenza, avian	Europe	Avian influenza overview June–September 2024: Between 21 June and 20 September 2024, sporadic cases of zoonotic avian influenza continued to be reported outside of Europe.	Action: H5N1 risk assessment to be reviewed
September	TBE	Europe	Assessing the risks of tick-borne encephalitis virus transmission through substances of human origin	Action: For TBEV risk assessment - ECDC indicates that consideration of 28-day deferral for donors that may have been exposed
October	Dengue	Italy	On 17 October 2024, Italy's National Institute of Health reported 25 new confirmed cases of dengue over the past week bringing the total to 650 confirmed cases. A large outbreak is ongoing in the Marche region with 133 locally acquired cases recorded, serotype DENV-2.	Action: Chair of SACCSO informed. Dengue risk applied to Modena region -Emilia-Romagna CN50-2024. No action for regions with small no. of Dengue cases. End of season. Local measures now removed.
October	Dengue	United States	On 7 October 2024, the first-ever autochthonous dengue case in San Diego County, United States reported	Action. Need to determine when US measures are implemented (see SACTTI 23-44b)
October	Dengue	United States	On 29 October 2024, media reported that Florida has recorded 5 new locally acquired dengue cases, bringing the state total to 55 cases since the beginning of 2024.	Action: Need to determine if US measures are implemented - see email from Claire 19.11.2024- 30 cases Miami Dade, Pasco (7), others < 5
October	WNV	Europe	The latest monthly epidemiological update shows that in 2024, 18 countries in Europe reported 1 202 locally	Action. Monitor Slovakia for next WNV season

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
			acquired human cases of WNV infection with known place of infection.	
October	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever	Pakistan	On 28 October 2024, media reported a case of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in Balochistan, Pakistan.	Action. Review CCHF risk assessment
October	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever	Afghanistan	9 new suspected CCHF cases and no associated deaths were reported in Afghanistan. This is a 55.0% decrease in the number of suspected CCHF cases compared to week 41 of 2024.	Action. Review CCHF risk assessment
October	Dengue	United States	First Locally Acquired Dengue Virus Infections – Pasadena, California, October–December 2023	Action. Need to determine when US measures are implemented (see SACTTI 23-44b)
October	Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus	United States	Action. Monitor for further reports	Action. Monitor for further reports
October	Influenza, avian A(H5)	United States	Two new cases of zoonotic avian influenza A(H5) have been reported in the United States	Action. Risk assessment under review
October	Oropouche virus	Brazil	Oropouche fever fatalities and vertical transmission in South America: implications of a potential new mode of transmission.	Action. Monitor reports
October	Oropouche virus	Americas	Reemergence of Oropouche Virus in the Americas and Risk for Spread in the United States and Its Territories	Action. Monitor reports
November	Dengue	USA	On 10 November 2024, San Bernardino County reported that the first locally acquired human case of dengue has been detected	Action: see previous month report for action
November	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	Uganda	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever cases diagnosed during an outbreak of Sudan virus disease in Uganda, 2022-23	Action: Review CCHF RA (but Sudan has VHF risk applied)
November	Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	Afghanistan	During week 3 - 9 November 2024, 10 new suspected CCHF cases were reported in Afghanistan, representing a 16.7% decrease in the number of suspected CCHF cases compared to the previous week	Action: Review CCHF RA
November	Malaria	UK	Malaria imported into the UK: In 2023, 2,106 cases of imported malaria were reported in the UK	Action: include for SACTTI information

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
November	Oropouche	UK	There has been a rise in Oropouche infections globally recently, although there have been no confirmed cases diagnosed in the UK this year	Action: monitor developments and note at SACTTI meeting
November	Oropouche	Italy	Replication-Competent Oropouche Virus in Semen of Traveler Returning to Italy from Cuba, 2024	Action: monitor developments and note at SACTTI meeting
November	Oropouche	USA	Oropouche Virus: An Emerging Neuroinvasive Arbovirus. In 2024, travel-imported cases of OROV disease were reported in both Europe and the US. As of October 15, 2024, over 90 travel-imported cases had been reported into the US (mostly from Florida) with no known local transmission	Action: monitor developments and note at SACTTI meeting
November	WNV	Germany	Wild bird monitoring for West Nile virus and Usutu virus in Germany, 2021 and 2022 shows circulation of both viruses increased in 2022 and a potential increase in human infections may be imminent	Action: Risk already applies to Germany; continue watching brief re: Usutu
November	Yezo Virus	China	A series of patients infected with the emerging tick-borne Yezo virus in China: an active surveillance and genomic analysis	Action: information and watching brief.
December	Dengue	Europe	The environmental conditions in the areas of the EU/EEA where <i>Ae. albopictus</i> or <i>Ae. aegypti</i> are established are currently unfavourable for mosquito activity and virus replication in mosquitoes	EID Monitor group email 17.12.24: all the dengue outbreaks in Italy are closed and measures are suspended ACTION: Obtain from UKHSA Porton Down, 2024/25 activity with country of travel/acquisition to see contribution from the USA.
December	Dengue	USA	Local transmission of dengue has been reported in 2024 in California, Florida, and Texas	Action. Continue to monitor; look for implementation of measures in the US (see SACTTI 23-44b). No recent increase in cases in Dec. Monitor closely.
December	Marburg Virus	Rwanda	On 20 December 2024, the Ministry of Health of Rwanda declared an end to the Marburg virus disease (MVD) outbreak	Action; Inform SACCS D note the end of the outbreak
December	Mpox	Belgium	On 18 December 2024, Belgium reported its first confirmed human case of clade Ib mpox	Escalated without waiting for EIR to SACTTI 23/12/2024

Table 2B: EIRs for SACTTI Parasitology and Blood Safety (SACTTI-P) committee information

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
January	Malaria	Argentina Brazil Brazil	An 80-year-old tourist and former judge in the state of Oregon, United States, died of malaria in hospital in Buenos Aires; and Detection of Plasmodium spp. in asymptomatic blood donors by the new Brazilian NAT PLUS HIV/HBV/HCV/ Malaria Bio-Manguinhos kit; and Media report on 19 January 2024, that the non-governmental organization SOS Orinoco issued an alert about a crisis due to malaria infections in the Alto Orinoco, Amazonas state	No action. Continue to monitor
January	Aedes albopictus	Spain	On 31 December 2023, media reported the detection of an adult specimen of the species Aedes albopictus (tiger mosquito) in one of the traps installed in the Tenerife South airport terminal	No action
	Dirofilariasis	Russia	On 24 January 2024, Saratov State Healthcare Institution reported a case of dirofilariasis in a 43-year-old. The article reports cases of dirofilariasis are increasing in frequency in Russia (case numbers not provided)	No action
	Leishmaniasis	Italy Austria	Re-emergence of human leishmaniasis in northern Italy, 2004 to 2022: a retrospective analysis, and The changing epidemiology of human leishmaniasis in the non-endemic country of Austria between 2000 to 2021, including a congenital case: A total of 311 new and 29 published leishmaniasis cases occurring between 01/01/2000 and 12/31/2021 in Austria	No action
	Lymphatic filariasis	Maldives	The Maldives was the first in the Region to be certified as having eliminated lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem in 2016. Out of the 683 screenings, 594 individuals were from Kulhudhuffushi City and 89 from Greater Male' Area. So far, the disease has only been identified within migrants with no local positive cases	No action
	<i>T. cruzi</i>	Europe	Chagas Disease in Europe. A review of the literature identified significant gaps and scarcity of updated	No action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
			information from European countries, with most studies reporting data from Spain and Italy	
	Malaria	Germany Romania Spain	Investigation of an airport-associated cluster of falciparum malaria in Frankfurt, Germany, 2022; and Severe malaria alert for Romanians who have been to Zanzibar after 4 cases of severe malaria were registered in December 2023; and Aedes albopictus has been successfully introduced into Europe in recent decades	No action
	Malaria	China Southeast Asia	An imported malaria case with repeated episodes of neurological syndromes resulting from different Plasmodium species; and Updating estimates of Plasmodium knowlesi malaria risk in response to changing land use patterns across Southeast Asia	No action
	Malaria	Cameroon Egypt Guinea Liberia Namibia Kenya	Cameroon kicks off malaria vaccine rollout: On 22 January 2024; and On 13 January 2024, media reported that The Egyptian state have submitted a file confirming that it is free of malaria free to the WHO, they are now awaiting a certificate of accreditation; and Study to better understand extent of asymptomatic malaria transmission in Guinea: rapid community survey; and On 24 January 2024, Liberia, announced the arrival of 112,000 doses of the RTS,S malaria vaccine for the first time in Liberia; and On 23 January 2024, media reported 392 malaria cases in Ohangwena Region, Namibia since the beginning of 2024; and The 2 cofactors in the etiology of Burkitt lymphoma (BL) are Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and repeated Plasmodium falciparum malaria infections.	No action
February	Babesia	USA	Five human pathogens detected by tick surveillance in New York City parks, 2014-2015 suggesting risk of tick-borne disease is considerable even in parks located adjacent to densely populated areas; and	No action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
		International	Transmission risk evaluation of transfusion blood containing low-density <i>Babesia microti</i>	
	<i>T.cruzi</i>	Brazil USA/Europe International	Mapping the Silent Threat: A Comprehensive Analysis of Chagas Disease Occurrence in Riverside Communities in the Western Amazon; and Mapping the Silent Threat: A Comprehensive Analysis of Chagas Disease Occurrence in Riverside Communities in the Western Amazon; and Growing evidence indicates that foodborne transmission of <i>T.cruzi</i> occurs as commonly as vector-borne infection	No action
	Leishmania	Pakistan Nepal Morocco Yemen	Surge of cutaneous leishmaniasis in Pakistan; and Source Tracing of <i>Leishmania donovani</i> in Emerging Foci of Visceral Leishmaniasis, Western Nepal; and On 14 February 2024, media reported that 5 cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis have been recorded in students in Tiznit province, Morocco; and On 30 January 2024, the World Health Organization reported around 15,000 leishmaniasis cases in Yemen in 2023	No action
	Malaria	Colombia Spain	On 21 February 2024, media reported that actions have intensified to contain a malaria outbreak that has been ongoing since December 2023; and Preprint (non-peer reviewed) Imported Malaria in a non-endemic country: sixteen years of cases in a Hospital in the South of Madrid, Spain	No action
March	Malaria	Brazil	Detection of <i>Plasmodium</i> spp. in asymptomatic blood donors by the new Brazilian NAT PLUS HIV/HBV/HCV/Malaria Bio-Manguinhos kit. Since the implementation of the NAT PLUS platform 1 Oct 2022 until February 2023, HEMORIO has successfully received and tested 200,277 donations. The platform detected two asymptomatic donors in the city of Rio de Janeiro, which is a nonendemic region for malaria	Information only for SACTTI parasites
March	Malaria	Tanzania	Prevalence of non-falciparum malaria infections among asymptomatic individuals in four regions of Mainland Tanzania.	Information to parasite group.

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
March	Babesia	China	Transmission risk evaluation of transfusion blood containing low-density Babesia microti using a mouse model	No action
March	Malaria	USA	On 27 March 2024, Roche announced that the FDA has officially approved the Cobas Malaria test, focused on inspecting blood donors for malaria, aiming to enhance the safety of blood supply	No action
April	Malaria	Spain	Diagnostic challenges of recurrent malaria in non-endemic areas.	Information for the SACTTI parasites.
April	Malaria	Brazil	P vivax infections are more likely to be subpatent and remain asymptomatic as malaria transmission decreases in Population-Based Prospective Panel Survey in the Brazilian Amazon	Information for the SACTTI parasites.
April	Babesia	South Africa	A case of babesiosis in a returning traveller from the USA	No action
April	Leishmania	Portugal	Epidemiological and Clinical Aspects of Cutaneous and Mucosal Leishmaniases in Portugal: Retrospective Analysis of Cases Diagnosed in Public Hospitals and Reported in the Literature between 2010 and 2020	No action
April	Strongyloides	New Zealand	Strongyloidiasis in Auckland: A ten-year retrospective study of diagnosis, treatment and outcomes	No action
April	Malaria	UK Europe Italy Reunion Kenya Tanzania USA Australia	New data show a rise in travel-acquired malaria cases; and Annual Epidemiological Report for 2022; and Anopheles sacharovi in Italy: first record of the historical malaria vector after over 50 years; and As of 18 April 2024, 22 imported Malaria cases were reported in Reunion; and Risk of Malaria Following Untreated Subpatent Plasmodium falciparum Infections: Results Over 4 Years From a Cohort in a High-Transmission Area in Western Kenya; and Recent data indicate that non-Plasmodium falciparum species may be more prevalent than thought in sub-Saharan Africa; and	No action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
			Autochthonous Plasmodium vivax Infections, Florida, 2023; and Imported malaria into Australia: surveillance insights and opportunities	
May	Malaria	Costa Rica	On 07 June 2024, media highlighted that Costa Rican authorities have reported 177 cases of malaria so far in 2024.	Action: Inform Chair of SACCSO to add malaria to Costa Rica; not urgent as other TV risk applied.
May	<i>T.cruzi</i>	Brazil	Preprint (non-peer reviewed) An outbreak of Chagas disease through oral transmission	No action
May	Malaria	Spain	A case of possible transfusion-acquired malaria in Zaragoza, Spain	Information only for SACTTI members
June	Babesia	Estonia	This year, eight people in Estonia have contracted babesia for the first time	No action
June	<i>T.cruzi</i>	International	Deferral of blood donors who have ever stayed in a <i>T.cruzi</i> endemic area: An international survey	No action
June	Malaria	Costa Rica India Dominican Republic USA	On 07 June 2024, media highlighted that Costa Rican authorities have reported 177 cases of malaria so far in 2024; and Transfusion transmissible malaria: seroprevalence of malaria parasitemia in blood donors in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India; and On 22 June 2024, media reported a cumulative of 440 malaria cases in Dominican Republic as of epidemiological week 23; and Increases in Imported Malaria Cases – Three Southern U.S. Border Jurisdictions, 2023	No action
July	Malaria	Australia	Managing the risk of transfusion-transmitted malaria from Australian blood donations: Recommendation of a new screening strategy.	Information to SACTTI parasites group.
July	Babesia	USA	Blood exposure to Babesia microti through sharps injury during surgery	No action
July	Leishmania	Thailand	Asymptomatic Leishmania Infection among Blood Donors in a Southern Province of Thailand	No action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
July	Malaria	Malaysia Ethiopia Rwanda	On 21 July 2024, media report that Malaysia has reported 25 cases this year; and In week 23 (ending 8 June 2024), there were 177,561 new malaria cases and 38 reported deaths; and On 21 July 2024, it was reported that malaria cases in Rwanda had passed the epidemic threshold by week 21 of 2024	No action
August	Babesia	Hungary Italy Netherlands	Confirmed Case of Autochthonous Human Babesiosis, Hungary; and Babesiosis in the immunocompromised population: Results from a multicentric cohort study conducted in Italy; and Autochthonous Human Babesiosis Caused by <i>Babesia venatorum</i> , the Netherlands	No action
August	<i>Toxoplasma gondii</i>	Egypt	Trends of <i>Toxoplasma gondii</i> and common transfusable venereal infections among blood donors in Menoufia Province, Egypt	No action
September	Malaria	Australia	Optimal malarial screening strategy in Australian blood donors: A cost-effectiveness analysis.	Action: For SACTTI Parasite Committee
September	Malaria	Australia	Managing the risk of transfusion-transmitted malaria from Australian blood donations: Recommendation of a new screening strategy.	Action: For SACTTI Parasite Committee
September	Babesia	England	A case of autochthonous human <i>Babesia divergens</i> infection in an immunocompetent woman in England	No action
September	<i>T. cruzi</i>	Europe International International	ECDC report identifies key risk factors for carrying parasite that causes Chagas disease in non-endemic countries; and Prevalence of Chagas disease among Latin American immigrants in non-endemic countries: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis; and Deferral of blood donors who have ever stayed in a <i>T. cruzi</i> endemic area	No action
September	Malaria	Spain	Possible transmission of <i>Plasmodium malariae</i> through liver transplantation	No action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
October	Chagas disease	Europe	Prevalence of Chagas disease among Latin American immigrants in non-endemic countries: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis.	No action
October	Chagas disease	International	The epidemiology of Chagas disease in the Americas: Sporadic transfusion-related infections likely occur each year across the Americas in spite of universal screening	Action – send to PC
October	Leishmania	Italy	The Uprise of Human Leishmaniasis in Tuscany, Central Italy: Clinical and Epidemiological Data from a Multicenter Study 2018 and 2023	No action
October	Malaria	Africa	Estimated Plasmodium 18S ribosomal RNA prevalence in asymptomatic blood donors from three African countries.	Action. Send to PC for SACTTI parasite. Samples were tested individually from WB lysates with the Procleix Plasmodium assay
October	Malaria	Egypt	Malaria free certification: Egypt.	No action. Risk removed.
October	Malaria	International	Laboratory detection of donors implicated in transfusion-transmitted malaria	Laboratory detection of donors implicated in transfusion-transmitted malaria
October	Babesia	UK	Babesiosis: Analysis of the Evidence for Infections in the United Kingdom	No action
November	Malaria	Brazil	Sociodemographic aspects, time series and high-risk clusters of malaria in the extra-Amazon region of Brazil	No action : for information only
November	Babesia	China	Pilot Surveillance of Babesia, Borrelia burgdorferi, and Anaplasma phagocytophilum Among Chinese Blood Donors - China, 2022-2023	no action: for information only
November	Babesia	USA	Transfusion related babesiosis in a non-endemic region (Western New York)	no action: for information only
November	Malaria	UK	Malaria imported into the UK: In 2023, 2,106 cases of imported malaria were reported in the UK	Action: include for SACTTI information

Table 2C: Selected examples of EIRs with no SACTTI action

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
January	Chapre virus	Bolivia	The epidemiology of Chapare virus, a rapid review: 5 case reports or case series and one laboratory based experimental study that reported on 2 outbreaks, between 2003 to 2004 and 2019 to 2020.	Information only for SACTTI members. Covered by current GDRI (Tropical Virus Risk for Chikungunya Virus, Dengue Virus, Yellow Fever and Zika Virus).
January	Dengue	USA	Introduction and Spread of Dengue Virus 3, Florida, USA, May 2022-April 2023	No action. Continue to monitor.
January	Western Equine Encephalitis	Americas	On 19 December 2023, PAHO/WHO, warned about the risk to human health associated with the circulation of the western equine encephalitis virus (WEE).	No action. One case from Uruguay only; TC and DENV deferrals already applied.
January	Nipah virus	Global Bangladesh	Nipah Virus: A Multidimensional Update; and New cases and deaths: Bangladesh. On 28 January 2024, media reported 2 fatal cases (1 confirmed and 1 suspected)	No action
February	Western Equine Encephalitis	Americas	Epidemiological update on the ongoing Western equine encephalitis (WEE) outbreaks in Argentina and Uruguay	Information only for SACTTI members. Note increased WEE activity in Argentina and Uruguay
February	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	France	Detection of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus in Hyalomma marginatum ticks, southern France, May 2022 and April 2023	Information only for SACTTI members. CCHFV detected in ticks in southern France.
February	Prion	Germany	A Rare Case of Iatrogenic Prion-like Pathogenesis of Cerebral Amyloid Angiopathy. The first case of iCAA in Germany after a dural graft was used.	Information only as being received by SABTO.
March	Bacterial	Multi-country	Product safety recall: InterPharma Sodium Chloride 0.9% 30ml linked to Ralstonia pickettii contamination	For information to SACTTI members.
March	Influenza A (H5N1)	Multi-country	The risk of zoonotic influenza transmission to the general public in EU/EEA countries is considered low.	For H5N1 risks assessment.
April	HIV	USA	HIV Transmission Associated with Receipt of Platelet-Rich Plasma Microneedling Facials at a Spa Among Former Spa Clients – New Mexico, 2018–2023. Transmission of HIV through cosmetic injection services via contaminated blood has not been previously documented; however,	For information to SACTTI members and SACCST chair.

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
			transmission of HIV via unsterile injection practices is a known risk.	
April	WNV	Spain	On 19 April 2024, media reported a case of West Nile virus (WNV) in a 5 year old male in Lebrija, Seville, in Spain.	Information only. One suspected case of WNV in Seville.
April	Syphilis	Denmark	Questioning risk compensation: pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and sexually transmitted infections among men who have sex with men, capital region of Denmark, 2019 to 2022.	Information only for SACTTI members.
May	Arbovirus	France	Aedes albopictus surveillance should be prioritised in 2024 in anticipation of the Paris Olympic Games.	No action.
May	Mpox	UK	Between 1 January 2023 to 30 April 2024, 196 cases of mpox have been reported in the UK.	No action.
June	Hepatitis A	Brazil	On 3 June 2024, the media reported on an outbreak of hepatitis A in the city of Parana, Brazil. The cumulative case count since the beginning of the year is 272 cases and 5 associated deaths. In comparison, the period for 2012-2023 recorded 134 cases over 11 years.	No action
July	Parvovirus B19	UK	Increasing levels of parvovirus B19 activity in England	No action
August	Powassan virus	Canada	Powassan Virus Encephalitis after Tick Bite, Manitoba, Canada	No action
September	Rat hepatitis	International	Rat hepatitis E virus (<i>Rocahepevirus rattii</i>) detected in drug users.	Action: Monitor for further reports.
September	Prion	Czech Republic	Optimizing Corneal Transplant Safety: The Impact of Mandatory Prion Protein Testing on Iatrogenic Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Prevention in the Czech Republic.	No action
October	Marburg virus disease	Ukraine	On 8 October 2024, media reported a case of Marburg virus disease (MVD) in Ukrainian soldier returning from Poland	No action
October	Marburg virus disease	Rwanda	Two cases were reported on 26 and 30 October 2024 by the Ministry of Health of Rwanda. Both cases were known contacts of confirmed cases	No action. Outbreak not yet declared officially

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
October	Mpox	UK	On 30 October 2024, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) announced the first detection of clade 1b mpox in London, England	No action. Info for risk assessment
November	Mpox	Europe	Since the last update on 8 October 2024, and as of 8 November 2024, 146 mpox cases have been reported from 12 EU/EEA countries	No action: information only
November	Zika	Americas Region	In 2024, as of 2 November 2024, 39,945 Zika virus cases (including 1,999 confirmed cases) have been reported in the Region of the Americas	No action: information only
November	Influenza, A (H5N1)	USA	Three new cases of zoonotic avian influenza A(H5) have been reported in California, and On 24 November 2024, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued a warning against drinking a specific batch of raw milk following detection of avian influenza A(H5) virus in a retail sample	No action: information only
December	Tickborne Orthonavivirus - Pathogens - Novel	China	Human Infection with a Novel Tickborne Orthonavivirus Species in China	No action. Keep under review.

Table 2D: EIRs for Organ Donation information

Month	Infectious agent/disease	Country	Comments	SACTTI Review
February	Fasciola hepatica	Canada	Eosinophilic Liver Abscess: A Case of Locally Acquired Fasciola hepatica in Alberta, Canada	General information for ODTD
April	Bacterial	Saudi Arabia	Donor blood cultures and outcomes after lung transplantation: a single-center report. This retrospective cohort study included adult patients who underwent lung-only transplantation for the first time between March 2010 and December 2022. Twenty-five (10.8%) of 232 donors had positive blood cultures, including a single, unexpected case with candidemia.	Information for ODTD.
April	COVID-19	USA	With a growing understanding of the safety of transplanting nonlung SARS-CoV-2-positive donors, the utility of universal screening should be questioned.	Information for ODTD.
April	<i>T. cruzi</i>	Argentina	In endemic countries, universal screening for <i>T. cruzi</i> infection is recommended before transplantation. In Argentina, the annual prevalence of Chagas disease in effective donors ranges from 2.5% to 5%.	Information only for ODTD.
August	HIV	Colombia	Identification of HIV infection in two solid organ recipients three years after transplantation. A case of possible transmission of HIV by organ transplant is described below, from a previously seronegative donor to two recipients.	No action: For ODT
August	Various	Asia	Donor-derived infections-Insights from Singapore, Japan, and Thailand.	No action: For ODT
September	HCV	Europe	Pathological Consequences in Anti-HCV Antibody-Positive Organ Donation to an Anti-HCV Antibody-Negative Recipient	Action: For ODT
October	Various	International	Non-Standard Risk Donors and Risk of Donor-Derived Infections: From Evaluation to Therapeutic Management	Action: For ODT
November	Bacterial	Korea	Bacterial contamination of autologous blood salvaged during deceased donor liver transplantation: a prospective observational study	Action: for ODTD information
November	Dengue	Argentina	On 31 October 2024, media reported 2 dengue cases associated with organ transplants in Argentina	Action: ODTD(RE: other SOHO, dengue risk applies to Argentina)

Appendix 2: Review of EIR sources 2024

Prepared by Qanisha Hall and Claire Reynolds

13 December 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to SACTTI on the joint NHSBT/UKHSA Epidemiology team's review of resources used in the monthly Emerging Infections Report (EIR) produced as detailed in the JPAC Position Statement 'Surveillance: Preparedness for emerging infectious agents'.

This report looks at sources used in 2024 (January to November) to inform the EIR, the fourth of a regular annual end-to-end review of sources to meet the recommendation of the 2021 audit of the UK blood services horizon scanning process carried out by the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA). An SOP has been produced by the team to guide this annual review of sources.

This document aims to:

1. Review and document sources used and their relevance to the monthly EIR
2. Confirm UKHSA EpiIntel sources used and any changes that may impact on relevance and timeliness for items of interest to the UK blood services
3. Receive recommendations for improving the surveillance system for increased usability for stakeholders
4. Document any changes to sources and process for producing the EIR

Summary

EpiIntel continue to use the WHO platform, and their daily and weekly reporting has provided a large number of useful updates. Close working with UKHSA has provided early updates on Usutu surveillance. Feedback for the EIR has been provided throughout the year and is being acted on to refine the EIR reporting process. EBA direct reporting to SACTTI chair remains crucial for timely information on outbreaks in Europe.

1. Review and document sources used and their relevance to the monthly EIR (Table 1)

Top 5 sources contributing most to the monthly EIR:

- UKHSA EpiIntel Blood weekly reports
- PubMed searches for specific items of SACTTI interest
- UKHSA EpiIntel Daily reports
- ECDC weekly CDTR reports
- ECDC other publications

2. Confirm UKHSA EpiIntel sources used and any changes that may impact on relevance and timeliness for items of interest to the UK blood services

- UKHSA continue to successfully use the WHO platform
- Specific themes or topics can be put forward to WHO to provide specific monitoring relevant to blood safety
- Continual audit by EIZ team in 2024 to further refine EpiIntel reporting

3. Receive recommendations for improving the surveillance system for increased usability for stakeholders
 - Senior Scientist invited to attend the monthly EIR review meetings, review reports also send to the Epidemiology team
 - Suggestions for formal updates are being planned for 2025
4. Document any changes to sources and process for producing the EIR
 - One minor change to capture items escalated prior to the monthly report in the EIR from September report.
 - Changes to staff producing EIR report with continuity provided by Senior Scientist.
 - Changes to SACTTI reviewers with continuity provided by SACTTI secretary.

1. Review of sources used by epidemiology team during 2024 (January to November)

During 2024, 29 sources (a decrease from 40 in 2023) were used to compile the monthly emerging report for SACTTI. Review items were deduplicated for the same source, area and infectious agent. Of 930 entries (an increase from 674 in 2023) there were 840 information only items (an increase from 603 in 2023), 69 potential review items (an increase from 65 in 2023), 1 initial screen required item (a decrease from 6 in 2023). 20 items were escalated to SACTTI for review ahead of the monthly EIR report September to November (Table 1). Items escalated January to August were not captured in the same way on the report.

Table 1. Count of sources used for the EIR, January to November 2024 (review items deduplicated)

Source Review		Status			
Source	Frequency (n)	Information Only	May require review	Initial screen required	Escalated for review prior to EIR monthly*
EpIntel Blood Weekly	503	443	46	0	14
PubMed	155	147	8	0	0
EpIntel Daily	82	78	2	0	2
ECDC CDTR	55	49	6	0	1
ECDC	19	18	1	0	0
NaTHNaC	12	10	2	0	0
UKHSA	11	11	0	0	0
Journal of Travel Medicine	11	11	0	0	0
ProMED	10	9	1	0	0
Vox Sang	10	10	0	0	0
EID	9	9	0	0	0
Eurosurveillance	7	6	1	0	0
WHO	7	7	0	0	0
PLOS NTDs	6	6	0	0	0
JID	5	5	0	0	0
MMWR	5	4	1	0	0
One Health	4	4	0	0	0
AABB News	3	1	0	0	2
Transplant Inf Dis	3	3	0	0	0
Parasites and vectors	2	2	0	0	0
HAIRS	2	2	0	0	0
Transfusion	2	1	1	0	0
Journal of Infection	1	1	0	0	0
CDC Travel Advisory	1	1	0	0	0
Epidemiology and Infection	1	1	0	0	0
NEJM	1	0	0	1	0
Lancet Infectious Diseases	1	1	0	0	0
AM J Transplant	1	1	0	0	0
IHR	1	0	0	0	1

* the escalated items were captured in the EIR from September

2. Confirm sources and any changes to UKHSA EpiIntel reporting

The UKHSA EpiIntel reports are an important resource for the Epidemiology team and provide daily, weekly and monthly horizon scanning reports that form the foundation of the blood service monthly EIRs.

The Epidemiology team contacted the Emerging Infection and Zoonoses (EIZ) team on 25/11/2024 to discuss the current EpiIntel reporting process. There have been no substantial changes to the EpiIntel horizon scanning process in 2024 and it was confirmed that the WHO platform continues to be used successfully. The last formal review of EIZ signal detection process was in 2023 which consisted of an analysis of signal detection pre- and post-integration of WHO's Epidemic Intelligence from Open Sources (EIOS) platform into the EIZ team's event-based surveillance process.

Since 23/04/2024 the EIZ team have been running a continual audit process to capture metrics such as number of signals reviewed/logged/communicated each day. The data is reviewed each quarter and used to help inform refinements to the disease specific boards scanned within the EIOS platform. A short comparative analysis of timeliness in signal detection using ProMED versus EIOS was also conducted. It was found that signals were picked up 2.5 days earlier on EIOS compared to ProMED which has informed the continuation of using the platform to deliver event-based surveillance work.

3. Receive recommendations for improving the surveillance system for increased usability for stakeholders

The Senior Scientist on the Epidemiology team has been invited to join the EIR review meetings to gain feedback on the utility of the EIR items and SACTTI requirements in order to continue to refine the EIR report.

Further refinements to the format have been suggested at the review meeting and are planned for 2025 reporting including: providing the Information Only items separately; clarity on updates to items already reviewed, downgrading media reports without official source and single cases to Information Only.

4. Document any changes to sources and process for producing the EIR

a) Amendments to SOP for sources

UKHSA National Situational Awareness Cell (NSAC) daily report has now been updated to an online dashboard in 2024, including national items of significance.

b) Amendments to SOP for process

Items escalated for review prior to monthly report circulation were included on the EIR from September and noted as 'Escalated already' to provide audit trail of all the items sent to SACTTI.

c) Changes to staff

The EIR is currently being run by 4 members of the team to provide cover, Claire Reynolds, Qanisha Hall, Katherine Daly and Tali Yawitch. Qanisha Hall joined the team in September 2024, replacing Ruth Wilkie who left in March 2024.

d) Changes to persons for review

From October 2024, the persons for review have changed to Dr Ines Ushiro-Lumb, Dr Lisa Jarvis, Dr Niamh O'Flaherty and Kate Tettmar.