

A Call to Action: Creating a Professional Development Framework for and with Transfusion Practitioners.

J Rock¹, Dr S Morton², S Tempest³

¹T2024 Transfusion Education Specialist, NHSBT; ²Haematology Consultant, Education Lead for Transfusion, NHSBT, Education;

³Workforce Learning and Development Consultant, stephanie tempest consultancy ltd.

Blood and Transplant



National Blood Transfusion Committee

Background.

The Transfusion Practitioner (TP) role was first recommended in the SHOT 2000/2001 annual report as a critical component to improve transfusion safety across the NHS. Over the past 25 years, the role has expanded to support patient safety through, education, haemovigilance, quality improvement, and more recently, digital implementation.

As the role has evolved to meet local population and service needs, there is now variation in TP responsibilities, job titles, and access to education and development opportunities across England. This variability creates challenges for workforce planning, role clarity and career progression. At present there is no nationally agreed framework to support TP development.

The lack of consistency has also contributed to recruitment and retention difficulties. Without clear expectations, agreed levels of practice, and recognised development pathways, potential applicants may be deterred, and existing TPs may feel compelled to move to roles with clear structure and support. This results in an increased turnover, loss of expertise and reduced service continuity, all of which can impact patient safety.

Investing in a nationally agreed and endorsed Professional Development Framework is essential to establish a consistent approach for this pivotal workforce, who act as connectors across transfusion. Aligned with the T2024 programme, the project aimed to work collaboratively with TPs and key stakeholders to identify development needs, map current practice, and propose levels of practice to support recruitment, retention, capacity planning, and recognition of the TP contribution to patient safety.

Aim- to work collaboratively with TPs across England and key stakeholders to identify development needs, understand role variation, and co-design a nationally agreed Professional Development Framework aligned to the T2024 strategy



Project Initiation:

- A Subject Matter Expert (SME) was appointed in Nov 2023 to lead development of the Framework
- The SME reviewed previous TP competency frameworks and existing national resources
- Steering and working groups were established, made up of TPs from across England representing a range of regulated professional backgrounds, experience and team/lone working
- Workshops were held with these TP groups and key stakeholders to agree the requirements of the Framework, including:
 - Promoting the TP role
 - Establishing governance and oversight for the Framework development and implementation
 - Gaining recognition from professional organisations

Engagement



30 TPs involved in the steering and working group



Exploratory Phase:

- SME reviewed existing Professional Development Frameworks from the NHS and relevant professional bodies and noting that most were designed with a framework consultant.
- Funding secured from T2024 and National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC) for Framework Consultant to co-develop the Framework.
- TPs across England were invited to share frameworks that use locally or were aware of and provide feedback on what they liked and/or disliked.
- National webinars were held to introduce the purpose of the Professional Development Framework for TPs..
- Webinars provided an opportunity to explain what the Framework



Webinars attended by >50% of the TP workforce



Innovatory Phase:

- A full working draft of the Framework was written using feedback from TPs via an online collaborative platform and co-designed with the steering and working groups.
- Sections of the draft Framework was shared with all TPs across England (Sept-Nov 2025), with opportunities to provide anonymous feedback.
- All feedback was reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the consultation draft, which was also shared with NHS Employers and Job Evaluation Group prior to a wider consultation (see National Consultation information under Key Milestones)



121 comments provided for consideration

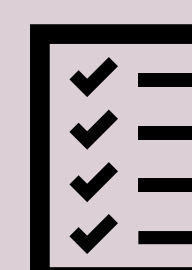


Summary and Next Steps

The national consultation has provided constructive, detailed feedback that reflects the combined expertise of the TP workforce, national leaders, strategic stakeholders and subject specialists.

The consultation confirmed that:

- TPs have clear ownership of the content and direction
- Recognition has been achieved, with the Framework discussed and supported at senior levels across NHSE and professional bodies
- The need for a national Framework has been actively endorsed, reinforcing its value to the workforce
- Stakeholders offered specific, practical suggestions to strengthen the draft demonstrating both confidence in and commitment to the Framework



40 feedback forms completed

>180 individual comments for consideration

Feedback from all sources is shaping the final version of the Framework ahead of publication in June 2026

- The project team will seek endorsement from national stakeholders prior to publication
- An implementation plan is being developed to support adoption and consistent use of the Framework in practice

Project Milestones



Agreement on Framework Direction

- ✓ TPs, stakeholders and the SME reached consensus to develop a Professional Development Framework for TPs
- ✓ The Framework will be hosted by the National Transfusion Practitioners Network (NTPN)
- ✓ The NTPN feeds into the National Blood Transfusion Committee (NBTC), providing national oversight and governance for the Framework.



TPs at a workshop to agree Framework design

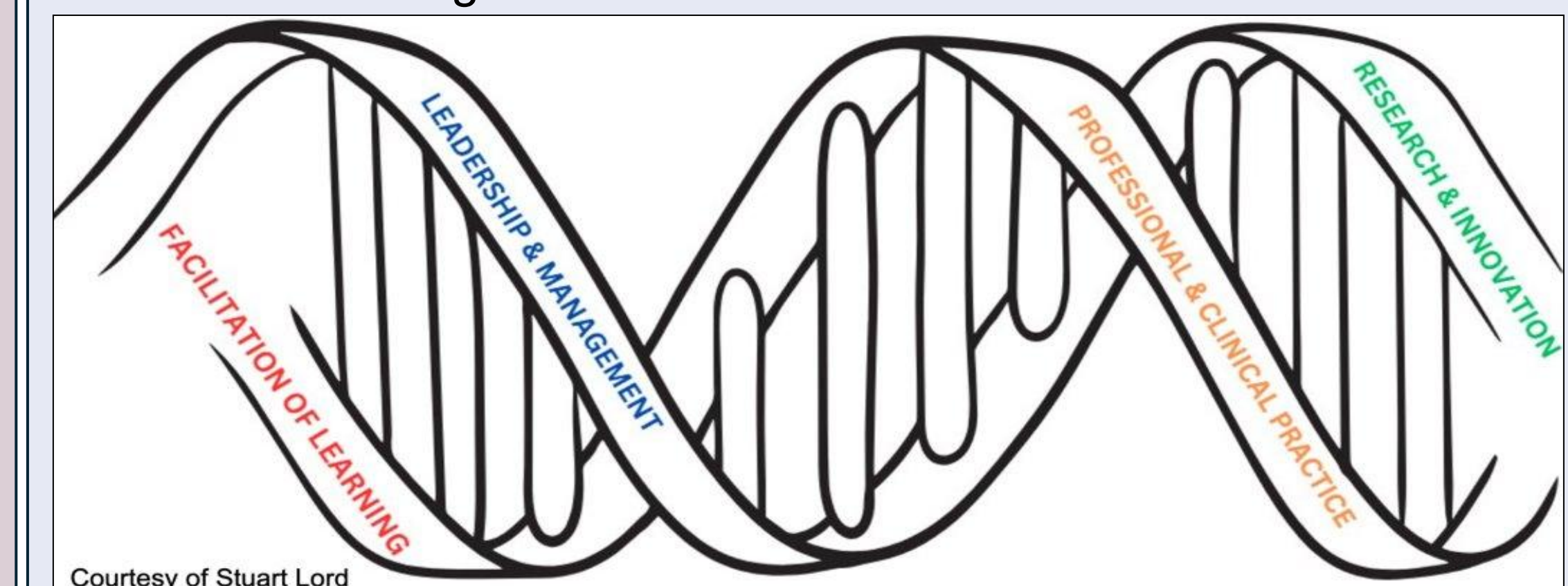


Co-design of Core Framework Components

An online collaborative platform enabled TPs from across England to contribute to, review and agree the foundational elements of the Framework. For the first time, the TP workforce nationally agreed the following for the TP role:

- ✓ Purpose Statement
- ✓ Core Values
- ✓ Levels of Practice
- ✓ Role-specific topic areas

TPs decided to move away from the traditional *Pillars of Practice*³ to avoid confusion with the Pillars of PBM already established designed (see infographic) within the role. *Strands of Practice* have been conceptualised and to demonstrate how the TP role requires all the stands to work together to fulfil the demands of the role.



Courtesy of Stuart Lord

Strands of Practice design created by TP incorporated into Framework



National Consultation

A consultation version of the Framework was drafted and distributed for national review between 5-31 Jan 2026.

It was shared with:

- ✓ Key stakeholders including patient representatives, NHSE professional leads from maternity, scientific, nursing and Allied Health Professions (reflecting the regulated origin profession of the TP workforce), workforce specialists; and relevant professional organisations
- ✓ Transfusion Practitioners across England

Engagement for the project was strong, with contributions received from a broad range of professional groups.

All feedback was analysed to inform refinement of the Framework.

How will the Framework Support Patients and Hospitals?

- Supporting recruitment, retention, and effective workforce planning by providing clear expectation, structured levels of practice and defined development pathways
- Improving service quality, safety, and compliance through consistent responsibilities, reduced variation, and strengthened alignment with governance and national standards
- Enhancing service efficiency and continuity by standardising the TP workforce, clear levels of practice, empowering TPs to focus on critical patient safety activities

References

1. Love EM, Jones H, Williamson LM et al, Serious Hazards of Transfusion (SHOT) Steering Group. The 2000/2001 Annual SHOT Report (2002)
2. Allard S, Cort J, Howell C, Sherliker L, Mifflin G, Toh CH. Transfusion 2024: A 5-year plan for clinical and laboratory transfusion in England. *Transfusion Medicine*. 2021;31(6):400-408. doi:10.1111/tme.12827
3. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/Levels-of-nursing/Four-pillars-of-nursing>

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