

3. Organisation of vascular services

Use of blood products >> Preoperative autologous blood donation

20% (34/173) of hospitals provided a service whereby patients could donate blood in the weeks preceding elective AAA repair. It is disappointing that this figure was so low. One reason suggested by the advisors was that it is unrealistic to try to organise blood donation for an operation booked for a particular date, only to find that the operation is frequently cancelled because other resources such as an HDU bed are unavailable (see the chapter on Surgery); the donated blood is then wasted. Reducing the rate of cancellations might allow greater use of this valuable technique.