

# Blood Sodium : Organisational Questionnaire

## A. Introduction

**Please complete one organisational questionnaire for each hospital in your Trust/Health Board that treats patients with abnormal blood sodium.**

### **What is this study about?**

To identify and explore avoidable and modifiable factors in the care of adults with abnormal levels of blood sodium in hospital.

### **Who should complete this questionnaire**

This questionnaire has been designed to collect data on the organisational structures surrounding the care provided to patients that have abnormal blood sodium.

It should be completed by or with input from, clinicians(s) that provide care to this group of patients. This is likely to include, but not limited to, endocrinology, nephrology, critical care, clinical biochemistry, emergency medicine, acute medicine and general medicine.

### **Questions or help**

Further information regarding the study can be found here: <https://www.ncepod.org.uk/Bloodsodium.html>  
If you have any queries about the study or this questionnaire, please contact: [sodium@ncepod.org.uk](mailto:sodium@ncepod.org.uk) or telephone 020 7251 9060.

### **About NCEPOD**

The National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD) reviews healthcare practice by undertaking confidential studies, and makes recommendations to improve the quality of the delivery of care, for healthcare professionals and policymakers to implement. Data to inform the studies are collected from NHS hospitals and Independent sector hospitals across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Offshore Islands. NCEPOD are supported by a wide range of bodies and the Steering Group consists of members from the Medical Royal Colleges and Specialist Associations, as well as observers from The Coroners Society of England and Wales, and the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP).

### **Impact of NCEPOD**

Recommendations from NCEPOD reports have had an impact on many areas of healthcare including:

Development of the NICE 'Acutely ill patients in hospital guideline' (CG50) - 'An Acute Problem' (2005).

Appointment of a National Clinical Director for Trauma Care - 'Trauma: Who Cares?' (2007).

Development of NICE Clinical Guidelines for Acute Kidney Injury, published 2013 - 'Adding Insult to Injury' (2009).

Development of ICS Standards for the care of adult patients with a temporary Tracheostomy, published 2014 - 'On the right trach?' (2014).

Development of guidelines from the British Society of Gastroenterology: diagnosis and management of acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding, published 2019 - 'Time to Get Control' (2015).

Development of the British Thoracic Society's Quality Standards for NIV, published 2018 - 'Inspiring Change' (2017).

**This study was commissioned by The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) as part of the Clinical Outcome Review Programme into Medical & Surgical care.**

**Hyponatraemia****1a. Is there a guideline for the management of patients with hyponatraemia?**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:****Please send a copy of the hyponatraemia guideline to sodium@ncepod.org.uk**

- Guideline sent  Unable to send guideline

**1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:****Does the guideline stipulate who should lead on the management of significant/severe hyponatraemia**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**1d. If answered "Yes" to [1c] then:****Who is the designated lead?***Grade and specialty*

**1e. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:****Is there a recommendation to send a repeat blood sodium measurement in the guideline (low)?**

- Yes - all patients  Yes - if meeting certain criteria  
 No  Unknown

**1f. If answered "Yes - if meeting certain criteria" to [1e] then:****Please state the criteria**

**When an abnormal low sodium level is identified****2a. Are there criteria for laboratory staff to escalate results to clinical teams?**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:****What are the criteria for laboratory staff to escalate results to clinical team(s)?**

- Sodium <120 mmol/L  Sodium <125 mmol/L  Sodium <130 mmol/L

If not listed above, please specify here...

**2c. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:****How are the clinical team alerted?***Please mark all that apply*

- Telephone  Email  
 Electronic alert on patient notes

Please specify any additional options here...

**3a. Is specialist advice available for the treatment of patients with hyponatraemia?**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:****Is this available at this hospital or another hospital providing a networked service?**

- This hospital  A networked service  
 This hospital and a networked service

**3c. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:  
When is it available?**

- 24 hours, 7 days a week
- 24 hours, Monday to Friday
- Normal working hours (0800 - 1800), 7 days a week
- Normal working hours (0800 - 1800) Monday to Friday
- Unknown

If not listed above, please specify here...

**3d. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:  
Who provides this service?**

*Please mark all that apply*

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endocrinology    | <input type="checkbox"/> Critical care         | <input type="checkbox"/> Renal team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Biochemistry |                                     |

Please specify any additional options here...

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**Hypernatraemia**

**4a. Is there a guideline for the management of patients with hypernatraemia?**

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

**4b. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:**

**Please send a copy of the hypernatraemia guideline to [sodium@ncepod.org.uk](mailto:sodium@ncepod.org.uk)**

- Guideline sent
- Unable to send guideline

**4c. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:**

**Does the guideline stipulate who should lead on the management of significant/severe hypernatraemia?**

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

**4d. If answered "Yes" to [4c] then:**

**Who is the designated lead?**

*Grade and specialty*

**4e. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:**

**Is there a recommendation to send a repeat blood sodium measurement in the guideline (high)?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes - all patients | <input type="radio"/> Yes - if meeting certain criteria |
| <input type="radio"/> No                 | <input type="radio"/> Unknown                           |

**4f. If answered "Yes - if meeting certain criteria" to [4e] then:**

**Please state the criteria**

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**When an abnormal high sodium is identified**

**5a. Are there criteria for laboratory staff to escalate results to clinical teams?**

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

**5b. If answered "Yes" to [5a] then:**

**What are the criteria for laboratory staff to escalate results to clinical team(s)?**

- Sodium >150 mmol/L
- Sodium >155 mmol/L

If not listed above, please specify here...

**5c. If answered "Yes" to [5a] then:  
How are the clinical team alerted?**

*Please mark all that apply*

- Telephone  Email  
 Electronic alert on patient notes

Please specify any additional options here...

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**6a. Is specialist advice available for the treatment of patients with hypernatraemia?**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**6b. If answered "Yes" to [6a] then:  
Is this available at this hospital or another hospital providing a networked service?**

- This hospital  A networked service  
 This hospital and a networked service

**6c. If answered "Yes" to [6a] then:  
When is it available?**

- 24 hours, 7 days a week  
 24 hours, Monday to Friday  
 Normal working hours (0800 - 1800), 7 days a week  
 Normal working hours (0800 - 1800) Monday to Friday  
 Unknown

If not listed above, please specify here...

**6d. If answered "Yes" to [6a] then:  
Who provides this service?**

*Please mark all that apply*

- Endocrinology  Critical care  Renal team  
 General medicine  Clinical Biochemistry

Please specify any additional options here...

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**Does your Trust have an agreed laboratory turn-around time for the following:**

**7a. Urine osmolality**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**7b. If answered "Yes" to [7a] then:  
How long is the turn-around time?**

 hours

**7c. Urine sodium**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**7d. If answered "Yes" to [7c] then:  
How long is the turn-around time?**

 hours

**7e. Serum osmolality**

- Yes  No  Unknown

**7f. If answered "Yes" to [7e] then:  
How long is the turn-around time?**

 hours

**7g. Is the turn-around time for the above samples audited?**

Yes                       No                       Unknown

**7h. If answered "Yes" to [7g] then:  
When was the last audit conducted?**

*month and year*

**7i. If answered "Yes" to [7g] then:  
What was the result of the last audit?**

% compliant

Unknown

*Value should be no more than 100*

**IV Fluid**

**1a. Does this hospital have an IV fluid lead?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
What is their grade and specialty?**

**1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
Is there dedicated time in their job plan for this role?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**1d. If answered "Yes" to [1c] then:  
What resources do they have available?**

*Number of programmed activities/sessions/hours*

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**Fluid balance charts**

**2a. Are the fluid balance charts electronic or paper?**

- Electronic                       Paper copy                       Electronic & paper                       Unknown

**2b. Does your Trust/Health Board audit the accuracy of fluid balance chart completion?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2c. If answered "Yes" to [2b] then:  
When was the last audit conducted?**

*month and year*

**2d. If answered "Yes" to [2b] then:  
What was the overall accuracy of completion in the last audit?**

%

- Unknown

*Value should be no more than 100*

D. Learning & development

**1a. Were there any serious adverse events relating to blood sodium levels (Fits, coma, death, cerebral pontine myelinolysis) that have occurred in your Trust/Health Board in the last twelve months?**

- Yes                       No                       Don't know

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
How many events were there?**

Unknown

**1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
How is learning from these events shared?**

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**2a. Is there training for Foundation Doctors regarding sodium levels and/or fluid management?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:  
Please detail what training there is**  
*e.g. online modules, face-to-face sessions*

**2c. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:  
Is this part of mandatory training?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2d. Does your Trust/Health Board have any educational training on the management of hyponatraemia for other staff?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2e. If answered "Yes" to [2d] then:  
Who can access this?**

- Nursing staff                       Training grade doctors                       Consultants

Please specify any additional options here...

**2f. If answered "Yes" to [2d] then:  
Please detail what training there is**  
*e.g. online modules, face-to-face sessions*

**2g. Does your Trust/Health Board have any educational training on the management of hypernatraemia for other staff?**

Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2h. If answered "Yes" to [2g] then:  
Who can access this?**

Nursing staff                       Training grade doctors                       Consultants

Please specify any additional options here...

**2i. If answered "Yes" to [2g] then:  
Please detail what training there is**



**1a. Is the prevalence of hyponatraemia tracked?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
How often is this tracked and reviewed?**

- Monthly                       Quarterly                       Annually

If not listed above, please specify here...

**1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:  
How does this feedback to the clinical teams?**

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**2a. Is the prevalence of hypernatraemia tracked?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:  
How often is this tracked and reviewed?**

- Monthly                       Quarterly                       Annually

If not listed above, please specify here...

**2c. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:  
How does this feedback to the clinical teams?**

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**Quality Improvement Projects (QIP)**

**3a. Has your Trust/Health Board performed any QIPs for hyponatraemia in the last 5 years?**

- Yes                       No                       Unknown

**3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:**

**Please describe the project, particularly how this changed or improved practice in your organisation**

**3c. Has your Trust/Health Board performed any QIPs for hypernatraemia in the last 5 years?**

Yes                       No                       Unknown

**3d. If answered "Yes" to [3c] then:**

**Please describe the project, particularly how this changed or improved practice in your organisation**

**3e. Has your Trust/Health Board performed any QIPs for IV fluid management in the last five years?**

Yes                       No                       Unknown

**3f. If answered "Yes" to [3e] then:**

**Please describe the project, particularly how this changed or improved practice in your organisation**

**Additional information**

**3g. Please use this space should you wish to provide further details on any of the answers you have provided (please include the question number)**

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**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

By doing so you have contributed to the dataset that will form the report and recommendations due for release in Autumn 2025