



DATE: 18-10-02

TO: Ordering Clinician

FROM: Dr. Ryan Lett, Anesthesiologist and Physician Lead for the Patient Blood Management Program

RE: Start Study for Clinicians - Screening by Technologists and Auditing to Reduce Transfusion

Regina and Saskatoon will be participating in a national, multi-site research project investigating the use of laboratory screening of transfusion orders to improve transfusion practice. Reviewing physician orders against guidelines for appropriate use is an effective form of clinical decision support which can be performed by blood bank medical laboratory technologists. A restrictive use of blood has been shown in numerous large randomized trials to reduce the use of red blood cells and is at least as good in terms of patient outcomes (mortality, length-of-stay, infections), and possibly better.

Starting in November, all red blood cell orders will be screened by transfusion technologists to assess appropriateness. Regina's transfusion guidelines as endorsed by the Patient Blood Management Committee are attached. The exceptions to the screening process will be patients in the Operating Room, outpatients and patients with hemoglobinopathies or active hemorrhage.

What will this mean to the ordering clinician? In order to assess appropriateness, increased communication with the lab is necessary. You may receive a call from the lab technologist to review the order, who will inquire about active bleeding and symptoms of anemia. You may also be asked about total number of units ordered. Current best practice in stable patients is to transfuse a single unit of blood and reassess. For more information about the study, an audio PowerPoint is available at: <http://www.transfusionquest.ca/associated-organizations/> at the bottom of the page.

A preprinted order set (PPO-601) was drafted to enhance communication with the lab and includes indications for transfusion, suggestions for intravenous iron, and units required (with a single unit being the default). Although not part of the study specifically, please use this order set to improve communication.

Thanks,

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