

## Frequently Asked Questions: Transfusion Stewardship - Red Blood Cells for Inpatients

### General

- 1. Who do I contact if I have questions about the new guidelines?**  
Call Dr. Charles Musuka at 204-237-2471 during regular business hours. Contact Transfusion Medicine (TM) on-call physician for urgent enquiries outside of regular business hours.
- 2. Who do I contact if I have questions about red blood cell requests for my patient?**  
The TM on-call physician is available 24-hours a day for emergency TM consults at 204-787-2071. For non-urgent consults, please contact [bloodydocs@sharedhealthmb.ca](mailto:bloodydocs@sharedhealthmb.ca)
- 3. How will the TM physician get in touch with the ordering physician for submitted non-urgent Request for Releases?**  
TM physician will contact the ordering physician either by telephone or email. Typically, this will occur within 1-2 business days.
- 4. In smaller health care settings, there can be transportation/time delays to receive blood products. Because of this, two units are typically ordered and given to ensure the patient reaches a stable hemoglobin range. With the new guidelines, are we only able to order one unit at a time?**  
Continue to order red cell units as normal using the appropriate Request for Blood Components requisition. The Transfusion Criteria will go into effect once a Request for Release of Red Cells is received from the clinical unit to the blood bank. The red cell units will be issued based upon the patient's location within the facility and hemoglobin value. If one or more of the units is subsequently not transfused, the blood bank may ship the unused red cells to their Hub site to be placed back into inventory.

### Inclusions/Exclusions

- 5. Do the guidelines apply to emergent situations or all requests for red blood cells from the Emergency Department (ED), as the ED may transfuse in non-emergent situations?**  
At this time, the guidelines refer to the location of the patient. If a patient is in the ED at time of the transfusion request, the guidelines will **not** apply to them. However, evidenced-based practice should be considered for all patients no matter their location. No requests will be refused for the ED.

### Hemoglobin Value Ranges

- 6. How long should we wait to draw a repeat complete blood count (CBC) after transfusion?**  
Studies have shown a CBC sample drawn 15 minutes after transfusing will give accurate results.
- 7. How long will it take to receive the results for a repeat hemoglobin (CBC)?**  
Once the sample has been received in the lab, you should expect a result in approximately 20 minutes.

**8. If hemoglobin is between 71-80g/L, the blood bank issues the unit of red blood cells. Why do they also send the request to the TM physician?**

**9.**

We do not want to delay the provision of blood needed, so it is issued without delay. Transfusion Medicine will follow up with the ordering practitioner within a few days to discuss the request and review possible other care options for similar situations which may present in future.

**10. How recent does the hemoglobin value need to be regarding the initial transfusion request?**

It is important to always use current patient information when making requests for care. The hemoglobin value used on the form should be from the same day (<24 hours).

**Request for Release Form**

**11. Does this release form replace ALL requests for red blood cells? Even from locations that are excluded e.g. Emergency?**

Once the project rolls out in your region, yes, this will be the new form for all red blood cell requests in Manitoba for all areas of health care. The previous request form (for all blood products) has now been divided into two request forms: one for red blood cells and one for other blood components and blood products.

**12. What happens to incomplete Request for Release (RfR) forms?**

Delays will occur if forms are not complete or legible as the blood bank will need to follow up with the clinical unit. Therefore, it is vitally important to ensure the request form is thoroughly filled in. The clinical unit may need to resubmit if the RfR is incomplete.

**13. Will the Type & Cross Match request form be changing?**

There are no plans to make change to the current Request for Blood Components requisition form.

**14. How do these new Request for Release forms affect the Massive Transfusion Protocol (MTP) packages?**

Continue to use the MTP packages available. A request has been submitted to the WRHA Print Shop to update the forms contained within the MTP packages. We will request the current supply be depleted prior to implementing packages with the new forms as all MTP patients are exempt from the transfusion criteria.

**15. Do we still use the CM077 for platelets?**

If your site currently uses the CM077 to order platelets, there is no change required. If you have questions about which form to use, please contact your facility Blood Bank.