



## **1. Applicability**

This document applies to all Alberta Health Services and Covenant Health employees, members of the medical and midwifery staff, students, and any other persons involved in the delivery of blood components and products to patient care areas.

## **2. Purpose**

Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) is committed to providing safe and effective blood components and products to patients. This document provides the transporter with basic knowledge on the handling of blood components and products.

Completion of this form (or education module where applicable) is required every two years. Proof of completion must be available upon request during audits or accreditation inspections. A label will be provided to apply to the staff ID card to identify the expiry year of the education. The expiry is December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year indicated on the label. After expiry, completion of a new form (or education module where applicable) will be required to obtain a new label.

## **3. Definitions**

**Blood components** The therapeutic parts of blood used for transfusion, namely, packed red blood cells, plasma, fresh frozen plasma, platelets and cryoprecipitate.

**Blood products** The therapeutic parts of blood derived from plasma by manufacturing companies. Examples include albumin, intravenous immune globulin, and prothrombin complex concentrates.

## **4. Handling Blood Components and Products**

Blood components and products may be transported individually, or in a blood transport box. Multiple units are often sent in a transport box or cooler when a patient is experiencing life-threatening bleeding, known as massive hemorrhage protocol (MHP). MHP boxes must be transported directly to the patient location with the utmost urgency.



Please initial each box to acknowledge it has been read.

## DO:

- ☐ Participate in confirming patient identity against the dispense request or pick-up slip, if required by your laboratory.  
**Why?** Confirmation of patient identity at the time of issue is important to ensure the correct unit is issued to the correct patient.
- ☐ Take the units straight to the Patient Care Unit.  
**Why?** To ensure timely delivery and infusion to the patient. Blood components and products are temperature sensitive and must not be out of a temperature-controlled environment for too long for patient safety.
- ☐ Notify care area when the product has arrived.  
**Why?** To ensure nursing staff knows that the product is there, so it can be given to the patient, and to ensure the product is not wasted due to improper storage.
- ☐ Hold units securely.  
**Why?** To prevent an accidental drop and potential breakage. Be sure the tags on the blood components/products do not fall off.
- ☐ Have a cart readily available prior to pick up if multiple units, a transport box or cooler is being requested.  
**Why?** Multiple units being sent in a transport box or cooler may indicate a patient is experiencing life-threatening bleeding and must be transported with the utmost urgency.

## DON'T

- ☐ Store blood in medicine fridges, lunch fridges, etc.  
**Why?** Blood components and products should only be stored in Transfusion Medicine approved and monitored devices to maintain quality and avoid wastage.
- ☐ Take blood components or products outside.  
**Why?** This can cause temperature fluctuations of the blood components or products and ruin their quality.
- ☐ Go for a break with blood components or products.  
**Why?** This is a delay in patient care; and also affects the temperature of the blood component or product.
- ☐ Carry next to your body.  
**Why?** This can cause a temperature increase and potentially ruin the quality
- ☐ Swing, hold by the segments or tags, or throw the blood components or products  
**Why?** This can cause a tear and result in a major spill which will delay patient care.

## Declaration

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and understood the information above  
(Please print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature/ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Contact Information: [Transfusion.SafetyTeam@aplabs.ca](mailto:Transfusion.SafetyTeam@aplabs.ca)