Alberta Health Services

Laboratory Bulletin

Date: June 7, 2016
To: AHS & Covenant – Edmonton Zone Medical Staff, Clinical Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Educators, and Unit Managers
From: Susan Nahirniak, Edmonton Zone Transfusion Service Section Chief
Re: Informed Consent for Transfusion

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:
Obtaining informed consent for administration of blood products is a requirement for accreditation of all hospital facilities, including the laboratories that provide the blood products to be transfused. Blood products have known benefits and risks and may have medically appropriate alternatives. Giving this information to patients is necessary to inform their choices. The Krever inquiry made it clear that consent for blood products should not be assumed to be included under the 'umbrella' of the comprehensive care plan without first discussing the information with the patient.

Consent can be for a single transfusion or for a series of transfusions (in a treatment plan). During the conversation to obtain informed consent the discussion should include whether it is one time only or a series of transfusions and that information should be captured on the consent form in the "Details of treatment/procedure/treatment plan" section.

More detailed information on the applicable consent policy and frequently asked questions regarding transfusion medicine consent can be found on the AHS website at
http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/lab/Page4326.aspx
http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/infofor/hp/if-hp-phys-consent-blood-FAQ.pdf

Action Required:
Due to ongoing issues with the documentation of Informed Consent for Transfusion in the Edmonton Zone, the following initiatives have or will be implemented as appropriate in the upcoming months to serve as reminders:

1. Inclusion of a yes or no check box on the Blood Transfusion Service requisition under a heading "Informed Consent Documented".

2. A statement on the report of results from the Transfusion Service stating "Obtain informed consent".

3. A stamp or sticker on blood component and plasma protein product tags stating "Informed consent required".

4. Clinical audits of the transfusion practice and associated documentation across the zone during the summer months.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:
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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:
Dr. Susan Nahirniak, Interim Deputy Zone Clinical Department Head & Transfusion Service Section Chief