



Date: February 10, 2020
To: Lethbridge and Area/Medicine Hat and Area Nursing staff
Lethbridge and Area/Medicine Hat and Area Laboratory staff
From: Lethbridge and Area/Medicine Hat and Area Transfusion Medicine Laboratory
Re: Handling Blood Components and Products Dispensed in Blood Transport Boxes

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message:

- Effective January 27, 2020, the Transfusion Medicine Department will label all blood transport boxes with instructions on the proper handling and removal of blood components and products that have been issued in the blood transport boxes.
- This applies **only** when a dedicated blood bank refrigerator is not available and the blood transport box is functioning as the storage location.
- Health care professionals in the Lethbridge and Area and Medicine Hat and Area sites, where a dedicated blood bank refrigerator is present, will follow the previously established processes. Refer to the available processes in the laboratory.

Why this is important:

- To provide guidance to health care professionals in situations where blood components and products will be issued from a blood transport box. This process **does not** replace the established issuing processes when a Blood Bank refrigerator is available at your facility.

Action Required:

- All health care professional staff involved in the handling and/or administration of blood components and products when received in a blood transport box are required to follow the instructions listed on *the External Resource – Handling Blood Components and Products in Blood Transport Boxes* document that is attached to the blood transport box lid.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

- Karen Blasetti – South Zone Transfusion Safety Officer, Karen.Blasetti@aplabs.ca, 403-502-8648 ext. 2272

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Michael Greeff, MD, Regional Laboratory Medicine Site Chief, Chinook Regional Hospital
Julio Silva, MD, Regional Laboratory Medicine Site Chief, Medicine Hat Regional Hospital



External Resource – Handling Blood Components and Products in Blood Transport Boxes

Applicability

All Health Care Professionals involved in the handling and/or administration of Blood Components and Products.

Purpose

To provide instructions for handling and dispensing Blood Components and Products in Blood Transport Boxes in the absence of a dedicated Blood Bank refrigerator.

Instructions

- Only remove Blood Components or Products from Blood Transport Box immediately before infusion.
- Only remove the required number of Blood Components or Products to be infused at one time.
- Ensure packing configuration is maintained at all times and Blood Transport Box lid is closed between Blood Component or Product removal. Remaining contents must not touch ice packs and are to remain between refrigerated gel packs.
- Platelet Components will be received only with room temperature gel packs.
- Contents must be transfused ASAP. Return unused contents and Blood Transport Box to Transfusion Medicine.
- Notify Transfusion Medicine of all Blood Components or Products that have been out of the Blood Transport Box for greater than 60 minutes.

Contact Information

South Zone Transfusion Medicine:

Lethbridge and Area 403 388 6050

Medicine Hat and Area 403 502 8648 ext. 1549