

Date: December 2010

To: All Zones - All Clinicians

From: AHS Transfusion Medicine Provincial Laboratory Integration Network

Re: **Informed Consent for the Transfusion of Blood and Blood Products**

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Situation:

- The recently implemented consent policy in Alberta Health Services requires that **express written consent for the transfusion of blood and blood products be obtained** for all patients who will receive non emergent blood or blood product therapy.
- Informed consent for transfusion of blood and blood products is an accreditation and regulatory requirement.
- The new policy does not outline specific details related to where consent will be documented, who will document consent or the means by which consent will be conveyed to the transfusion service.
- The Transfusion Medicine Network, in consultation with various health practitioners, is in the process of developing a standard procedure and documentation process for consent to transfusion in the province.

Background:

- In many areas of the province, consent policies for the transfusion of blood and blood products were already in place prior to development of the new AHS consent policy.

Assessment:

- Additional consideration and consultation pertaining to the documentation of informed consent for transfusion will be required prior to establishing a province wide procedure.

Recommendations:

- Use of the new consent form or pre-existing zone specific consent processes for documenting transfusion for specific procedures are acceptable until a province wide procedure can be developed.
- **Obtaining consent is the duty of the “most responsible health practitioner” which in the case of transfusion is most often the attending physician.**
- For questions or further information please see the [AHS Medical staff website](#) where FAQ, physician information for transfusion and patient information will be posted.

For additional questions contact:

Your hospital Transfusion Medicine Service or Laboratory

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by AHS Provincial Transfusion Medicine Integration Network