GUIDELINES FOR PATIENT MONITORING DURING A TRANSFUSION
1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 A policy shall be established for the transfusion and administration of blood components and blood products that include patient monitoring pre, during and post transfusion.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 **Transfusionist**: individual who administers a blood transfusion.

2.2 **Vital Signs**: the measurement of temperature, pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure.

3.0 General Information

3.1 The patient shall be observed for changes in status pre, during and post a blood component and blood product transfusion in order to detect adverse reactions.

3.2 If a patient exhibits signs and symptoms of a transfusion reaction the transfusionist shall follow established facility policy for management of a transfusion reaction.

4.0 Quality Control

4.1 Vital signs shall be documented in the patient’s medical health record throughout the transfusion.

4.2 Patient’s shall be informed of possible adverse reactions and encouraged to notify nursing staff of any change in their initial status.

4.3 The transfusion rate should be specified either by a physician or facility policy.
4.4 It is recommended that the patient remain in the transfusion area for monitoring until completion of the transfusion. If the patient requires transportation to another care area the patient should be accompanied by a qualified healthcare professional for continued monitoring.

5.0 Process or Procedure

5.1 Explain the administration procedure for blood components and/or blood products to the patient.

5.2 Inform the patient of possible signs and symptoms of an adverse reaction (chills, rigors, hives or itching, difficulty breathing, backache, pain) and encourage the patient to notify nursing staff of any change in their initial status during a blood component and/or blood product infusion.

5.3 Obtain and document pre-transfusion (baseline) vital signs prior to initiating all blood components and/or blood products. These include temperature, pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure.

5.4 Transfuse blood components and blood products slowly for the first 15 minutes.

5.5 Monitor patient closely within the first 15 minutes of initiating blood component and/or blood product transfusions for signs and symptoms of a transfusion reaction.

5.6 Obtain and document patient’s vital signs 15 minutes after initiation of the blood component and/or blood product transfusion.

5.7 Increase flow rate to designated infusion rate after the first 15 minutes if the patient does not exhibit signs and symptoms of an adverse reaction.

5.8 Monitor patient throughout the infusion of blood components and/or blood products checking the intravenous site and flow rate and for signs and symptoms of adverse reactions.
5.9 Obtain and document the patient’s vital signs every hour during the transfusion of blood components and/or blood products or according to facility policy.
Note: Some blood products require increased monitoring with increased infusion rates and changes in lot numbers. Monitor according to product guidelines and facility policy.

5.10 Complete the transfusion of blood components and blood products within 4 hours of removal from controlled temperature storage location.

5.11 Obtain and document patient’s vital signs after completion of the blood component and/or blood product transfusion.

5.12 Inform patient of possible post transfusion reaction signs and symptoms and appropriate action.

6.0 Records Management

6.1 All transfusion records in the recipient’s medical chart shall be retained in accordance with health care facility’s retention policy for medical records.
Guidelines for Patient Monitoring During a Transfusion

7.0 References


