

Quality and Safety is at the heart of the Blood Safety Portfolio Group

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Safe blood management is essential within the Emergency Department (ED), where the acutely ill patient relies on receiving proficient nursing care. Improving the experience and quality of emergency care for patients is at the heart of the Blood Safety quality portfolio group.

The portfolio was established to review processes and improve professional practise around the collection and processing of pathology specimens, as well as minimising the risk to patients presented through transfusion.

Patient blood management has been identified as an area of preventable harm. Through professional pride and support through empowerment from the organisation, the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards are maintained, ensuring blood and blood products are received by patients appropriately and safely.

Via assessment of practise and auditing, the portfolio has been able to identify the following issues and implement timely, sustained interventions to increase patient safety and quality outcomes:

Pathology collection prior to assessment increases the risk of mislabelling, over ordering and false positive results. The portfolio implemented a strategy to change practises around blood collection (no form no specimen), without an impact to the ED length of stay. An escalation process was also developed to assist in identifying repeat errors increasing individual professional accountability.

The portfolio takes responsibility of related blood safety education. All nurses are expected to have completed the BloodSafe eLearning and Intravenous Cannulation course. Nurses are encouraged and expected to attend education sessions including topics such as; Acute Blood Transfusion & Cross Match, and Group & Screen Collection.

A blood transfusion pack has been developed and introduced to the emergency department. Our aim was to provide the best possible patient outcomes by supporting staff to provide a high standard of clinical care. The evaluation of these packs has shown a positive impact and as a result they are being introduced to the rest of the hospital.

The portfolio has achieved some outstanding results, but so much more can be accomplished. As a result of these achievements many more of the ED team have joined the group. Blood safety is now achieved through the provision of quality emergency nursing care, with engagement and ownership of quality, by those directly providing the care.