BDS19 Prepare to administer transfusion of blood/blood products to patients

About this workforce competence
This workforce competence is about the preparation required for the administration of a transfusion of blood/blood products to an individual who has been identified as requiring this procedure.

This includes correctly identifying the patient and confirming that administration documentation is accurate, legible and complete. It also involves explaining the process to the patient and confirming patent venous access.

This workforce competence is relevant to anyone required to carry out this activity to support safer blood transfusion by ensuring the correct blood/blood product is given to the correct patient.

This workforce competence has specific links with the following workforce competences related to transfusion of blood/blood products:

- BDS17 Organise the receipt of blood/blood products for transfusion
- BDS18 Collect blood/blood components for transfusion
- BDS20 Administer a transfusion of blood/blood products
- Obtaining a venous blood sample

Links
This workforce competence has indicative links with the following dimensions and levels within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004)

Dimension: HWB7 – Interventions and treatment related to the structure and function of physiological and psychological systems.
Level: 4
Origin
This workforce competence has been developed by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA), in collaboration with Skills for Health. The NPSA is currently working towards ensuring that the competencies receive endorsement from Skills for Health and are displayed on their website in 2007.

Glossary
This section provides explanations and definitions of the terms used in this workforce competence. In competences it is quite common to find words or phrases used which you will be familiar with but which, in the detail of the competence, may be used in a very particular way.

- **Additional protective equipment** includes types of personal protective equipment such as visors and protective eyewear.
- **Contaminated** includes items contaminated with body fluids/chemicals.
- **Blood transfusion record and/or prescriptions** denotes the term used for the documentation on which the blood transfusion has been ordered/prescribed – this will vary across care settings and environments such as the hospital and community settings.
- **Personal protective clothing** includes items such as plastic aprons, gloves – both clean and sterile – footwear, dresses, trousers, shirts and all-in-one trouser suits.

Scope
This section provides guidance on possible areas to be covered in this workforce competence.

**Methods of identification**
May include:

- a) verbally, by positive verbal identification
- b) using wristbands/name badges for identifying the individual
- c) labels on the blood and/or other blood products
- d) using other appropriate communication methods, e.g. Makaton
Patient
May include:

a) neonates and infants
b) children and young people
c) adults
d) older people

Relevant member of staff
May include:

a) person in charge of the care area
b) doctor who prescribed the blood transfusion

Special infusion requirements
May include:

a) irradiated or CMV negative blood is required
b) time/rate if transfusion

Standard precautions and health and safety measures
May include:

a) hand washing/cleansing before, during and after the procedure
b) the use of **personal protective clothing** and **additional protective equipment** when appropriate
c) matching patient documentation and labelling on the blood and/or blood product
d) ensuring correct and complete labelling of blood and/or other products
e) ensuring one unit is removed for one patient at a time (unless that patient is suffering from a massive bleed)
f) disposing of waste including sharps
g) safe moving and handling techniques
h) untoward incident procedures

Vital signs
Includes:

a) blood pressure
b) pulse rate
c) temperature
Performance Criteria

You need to:

1. apply **standard precautions for infection control** and any other relevant **health and safety measures**
2. identify the **patient** requiring the transfusion using appropriate **methods of identification**
3. apply local procedures for identifying unconscious patients, neonates or those who are unable to verbally confirm their identity
4. check the **blood transfusion prescription** to confirm:
   - that there is a documented reason why the blood transfusion is required
   - the number of units to be transfused
5. report any discrepancies or omissions you might find to a **relevant member of staff**
6. check the patient’s transfusion history to ascertain if any **special transfusion requirements** have been identified on the prescription
7. explain the procedure to the patient and give them sufficient information on the blood transfusion so that they are able to make an informed decision about receiving it
8. check the patient’s understanding of the reason the transfusion is being administered and answer any questions that the patient has on the blood transfusion clearly and accurately
9. check the patient’s **vital signs** before the transfusion is administered to:
   - confirm their suitability for the procedure
   - record a baseline for comparison during the procedure
10. confirm that all blood transfusion administration records and prescriptions are available, up to date and legible with the member of staff leading the process
11. confirm that the patient has patent venous access prior to organising collection of blood and/or other blood products from the fridge/transfusion laboratory
12. confirm any intravenous fluid in the giving set is compatible with blood product(s) to be transfused
13. sign the prescription to confirm that the patient identification checks have been carried out at the bedside.
Knowledge and understanding

You need to apply:

Legislation, policy and good practice:

K1. A factual knowledge of the current European and national legislation, national guidelines and local policies and procedures which affect your work practice in relation to administering blood transfusions and/or other blood products

K2. A working knowledge of your responsibilities and accountability in relation to the current European and national legislation, national guidelines and procedures

K3. A working knowledge of the importance of obtaining positive confirmation of an individual’s identity and consent before starting the blood transfusion procedure, and effective ways of getting positive identification

K4. A working knowledge of organisational policy on the appropriate way to identify the following groups of patients:
   a) unconscious patients
   b) unknown patients
   c) neonates
   d) patients unable to verbally identify themselves for whatever reason

K5. A working knowledge of the action to take in the event that a patient is verbally unable to identify themselves and there is no wristband in situ

K6. A factual knowledge of the importance of working within your own sphere of competence and seeking advice when faced with situations outside your sphere of competence

K7. A working knowledge of the importance of applying standard precautions and the potential consequences of poor practice

K8. A working knowledge of how infection is spread and how its spread may be limited – including how to use or apply the particular infection control measures needed when working with blood

K9. A working knowledge of the adverse events/patient safety incidents which can arise during the administration of blood and/or other blood products including:
   a) the potential consequences of checking blood for more than one patient at a time
   b) misidentifying individuals at the bedside
   c) incorrectly labelled blood products
   d) being distracted and interrupted during bedside checking
Procedures and techniques

K10. A working knowledge of the blood transfusion administration process

K11. A working knowledge of the patient identification process and the checks that are necessary for confirming that the blood product is labelled correctly

K12. A working knowledge of the factors involved in the procedure which could affect the quality of the blood

K13. A working knowledge of the remedial actions you should take if there are any problems identifying the patient

K14. A working knowledge of the process for preparing for administration of a transfusion of blood/blood products including:
   a) checking patient identification
   b) recording of the individual's vital signs pre transfusion

K15. A working knowledge of how and to whom you need to report any concerns regarding any aspects of pre transfusion checks including:
   a) the patient's pre transfusion vital signs
   b) documentation/prescription
   c) venous access

Care and support of the individual

K16. A working knowledge of the concerns which individuals may have in relation to receiving a blood transfusion

K17. A working knowledge of how to prepare an individual for receiving a blood transfusion, including how their personal beliefs and preferences may affect their preparation

K18. A working knowledge of the human errors and systems problems which lead to blood transfusion incidents including:
   a) omitting bedside checks
   b) poor written and verbal communication
   c) time pressure, high workload and distractions/interruptions during tasks

Reporting, recording and documentation

K19. A working knowledge of the information that needs to be recorded on the transfusion record and in the patient's case notes during the preparation process

K20. A working knowledge of the importance of keeping accurate and up to date records
K21. A working knowledge of the importance of immediately reporting any issues which are outside your own sphere of competence without delay to the relevant member of staff.