

# ANNP Authorisation of Blood Components Consent for Blood Transfusion on the Neonatal Unit



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# Sources of essential information

- Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues, and Organs (SaBTO)

➤ Recommendations on consent for blood transfusion

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/advisory-committee-on-the-safety-of-blood-tissues-and-organs>

- General Medical Council (GMC)

➤ Consent guidelines

[http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical\\_guidance/consent\\_guidance\\_index.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance/consent_guidance_index.asp)

- NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT)

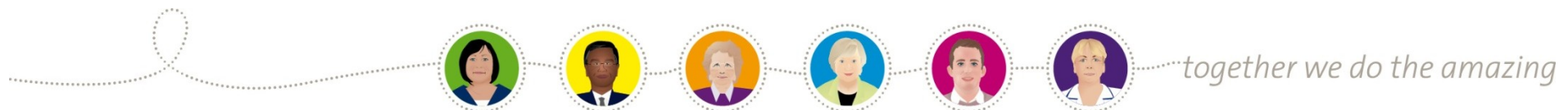
➤ Patient Information leaflets

[http://hospital.blood.co.uk/library/patient\\_information\\_leaflets/leaflets/index.asp](http://hospital.blood.co.uk/library/patient_information_leaflets/leaflets/index.asp)

- Learn Blood Transfusion

➤ E-learning package on consent

<http://www.learnbloodtransfusion.org.uk/>



# A Child in Trust

- Throughout history, children were seen as the property of its parents which they could do with as they pleased.<sup>1</sup>
- Today, the role of parent or guardian is to act as trustee of the child and safeguard their rights and interests until the child can decide for themselves.<sup>2</sup>

1. Lynch, Jayne 'Consent to Treatment' (Oxon: Radcliffe Publishing, 2011) p78

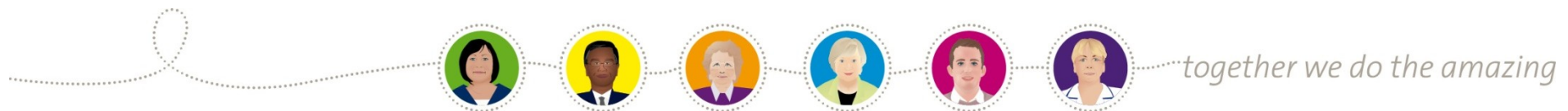
2. *Ibid.*



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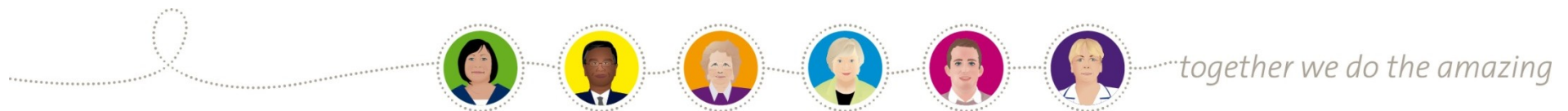
**Valid consent** for blood transfusion  
should be obtained and documented in  
the patient's clinical record by the  
healthcare professional

What is meant by valid consent?



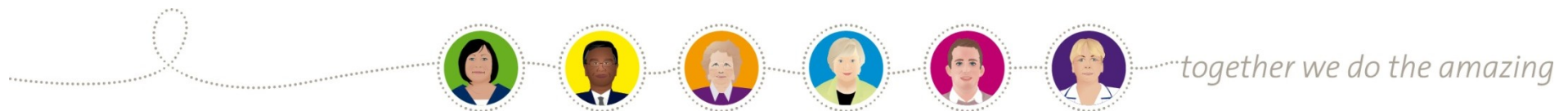
# How can we obtain valid consent?

....we can't ask the patient!



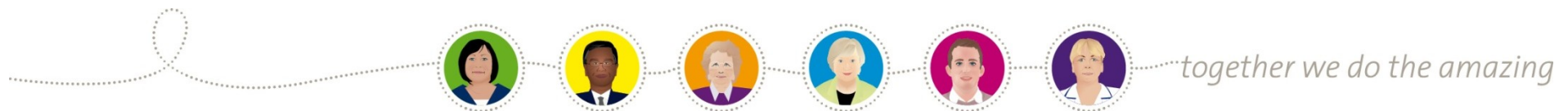
# Valid consent....

- As with adults, consent should be seen as a process, rather than a one off event
- Where possible, time should be provided to consider the risks and benefits



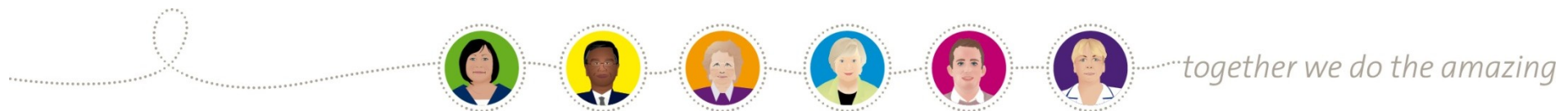
## Because life is rarely straightforward...

- What about parents who do not agree with each other?
- What about when the health care professionals and the parents do not agree?
- What about refusal of treatment?
- What about when the parents are children themselves?



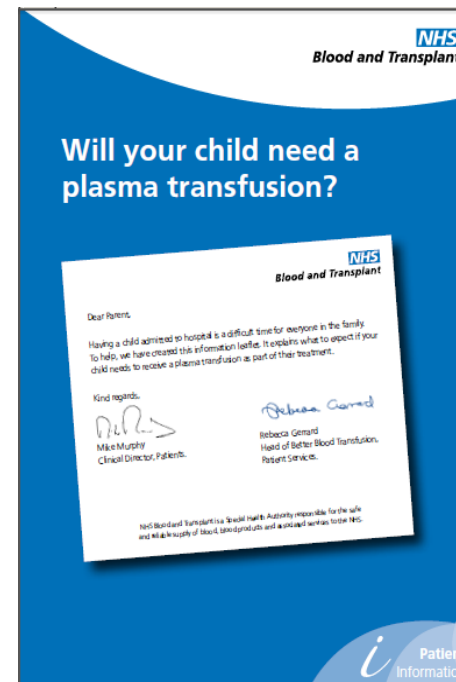
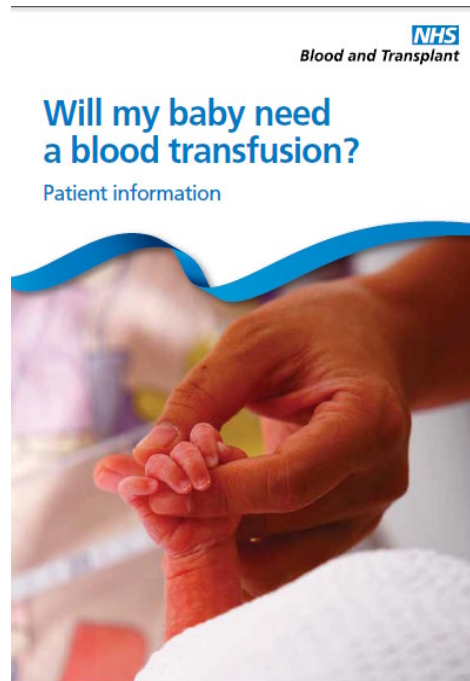
# Neonatal Transfusions

- Patient lacks capacity!
- Anxiety for parents  
(Stressed, new and difficult environment, totally overwhelmed)
- Understanding risk
- Urgency of Transfusion
- Terminology/ concurrent treatments
- Parental responsibility





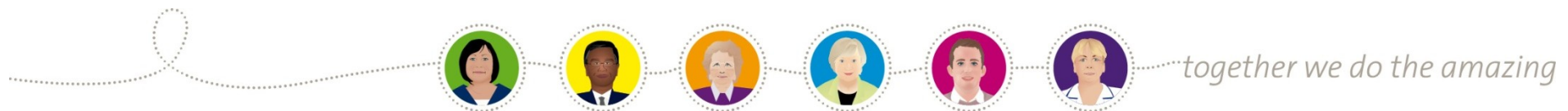
# Tools - to aid your discussion and ensure standardised information for parents



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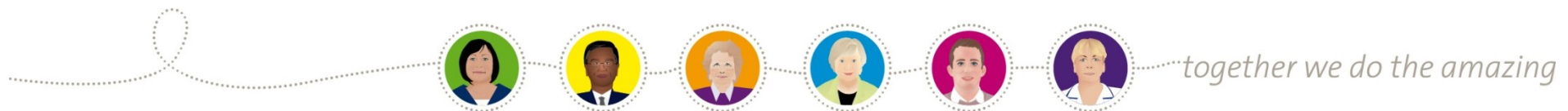
# Documentation...as important as ever!

- Please remember to document any discussions regarding consent for transfusion in the patient's medical records



## Retrospective consent....

- We should also inform parents when their baby has been transfused in an emergency situation
- This is known as retrospective 'consent'



“ I can't remember which twin had the transfusion.....they had antibiotics for three days. I think the transfusion lasted one day”

“I was given a leaflet, I think I read it, I can't remember”

“I was told he needed a transfusion.....that's good enough for me. If he needed it, then I would want him to have it”

“They were talking of meningitis....it's all a bit of a blur”

“All I needed to know is what my Son needed at the time”



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They spoke about the benefits....but we had to specifically ask about the risks

We would have liked to donate our own blood to our baby

The thought of someone else's blood going into our baby was very upsetting. Despite being told that the blood is screened, we remained sceptical about the infection risks

...instead of being asked if we were OK with blood transfusions, the question seemed to be "are you a Jehovah's Witness?". There seems to be an assumption that because we weren't then blood transfusions wouldn't be a problem.



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# Questions please....

