

MEMO

Date: March 20, 2020

To: Dr. Perry Gray, Dr. Nancy Dixon, Dr. Myron Thiessen, Dr. Deborah Mabin
Monika Warren, Krista Williams, Marion Ellis, Shannon Guerreiro, Dr. Charles
Musuka, Petr Kresta

From: **Dr. Brent Roussin**
Chief Provincial Public Health Officer
Lanette Siragusa, Provincial Lead
Health System Integration & Quality,
Chief Nursing Officer, Shared Health

Re: **Red blood cell transfusion practice change in response to shortages
during COVID-19**

The National Emergency Blood Management Committee has issued a Green Phase Advisory due to a decrease in blood and blood product donations (see attached document in email). As COVID-19 containment measures will continue indefinitely and blood shortages can be expected to persist, Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and Shared Health are expediting the implementation of an Inpatient Transfusion Guideline which had previously been identified as a CPSP and Choosing Wisely initiative.

This guideline establishes best practices in transfusion medicine and has been in development over the last number of months with an anticipated launch date of summer 2020. In light of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, this timeline has been accelerated and the following changes for **in-patients** will take effect beginning March 30, 2020.

- **Transfusion of red blood cells should occur one unit at a time in stable non-bleeding patients**
- **Hemoglobin thresholds for transfusion will be imposed**

Additional information related to these changes will be forthcoming with both WebEx and video options, as well as informational materials. Please share this communication and all related messaging to all nursing, medical and administrative leadership in inpatient areas. Training/awareness of the change will begin immediately to ensure staff and physicians are familiar with the change in guideline. We appreciate your attention and assistance in ensuring clinical staff are provided with the appropriate training opportunities.