

Transfusion Education Strategy 2021

Produced on behalf of the Blood Health National Oversight Group (BHNOG)



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

Introduction of the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations (BSQR) (2005)¹ and the NPSA Safer Practice Notice SPN 14: 'Right patient, right blood'² identified a need through law for Health Boards (HBs) to provide appropriate, timely and regularly updated training for all staff involved in the transfusion process.

Blood transfusion is a complex multi-step process involving personnel from diverse clinical backgrounds with differing levels of knowledge and understanding. In order to correctly and safely fulfil their role in the transfusion process each individual needs to be trained to the appropriate level. Transfusion education is also an integral part of the NHS Wales' Blood Health Plan³ (BHP) requiring competent trained staff in every aspect of the transfusion pathway.

This document defines the Transfusion Education strategy for all staff involved in the transfusion pathway across NHS Wales and is endorsed by the Blood Health National Oversight Group (BHN OG).

1.2. BHN OG Role in Transfusion Education

The BHN OG is the national oversight group for transfusion and transfusion related matters in Wales. It was established in 2017 to support the delivery of the BHP across the NHS in Wales. The BHP and consequently the BHN OG have identified a number of key strategic aims relevant to transfusion which facilitate best practice. Integral to these aims is the development of a transfusion education strategy.

The role of the BHN OG in transfusion education is to support and promote key transfusion educational programmes, thus allowing expansion of transfusion knowledge for a wide range of clinical and healthcare professionals. These programmes will be managed via the BHN OG Education Strategy Group (ESG).

The BHN OG ESG will be responsible for developing the strategies used for delivery of education ensuring that it is engaging, informative and most importantly accessible. Transfusion education will need to provide users with the knowledge and skills to inform and develop their own practice encouraging learning opportunities which can lead to behavioural changes i.e. empowering staff to do the right thing. Refer to *Appendix 1* for an overview of the relationships within the BHN OG structure.

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2. IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Who will deliver

Transfusion education is extremely complex and involves an extensive range of healthcare professionals, requiring a wide variety of skills and knowledge to ensure safe and appropriate transfusion is undertaken to achieve positive patient outcomes.

Currently the majority of this training is provided by Transfusions Practitioners (TPs), who are employed by individual HBs, with strategic oversight provided by the Blood Health Team (BHT) based in Welsh Blood Service (WBS).

One of the fundamental aims of the BHNOG in implementing the BHP is to engage key professionals and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from across NHS Wales in the development, delivery and consolidation of transfusion education.

Linking with these key individuals will ensure delivery of standardised transfusion principles and knowledge advocating the 'Once for Wales' approach endorsed by Welsh Government and allowing transfusion education to become an integral part of learning within each HB.

This will be coordinated by the BHNOG ESG who will work with clinical, scientific and academic networks across Wales to develop new and innovative approaches to deliver the material.

Figure 1.

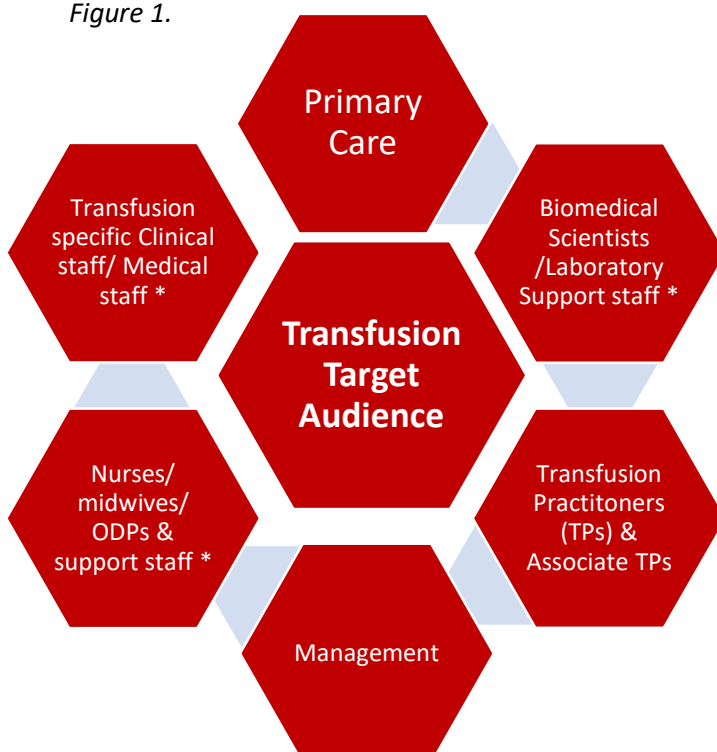


Figure 1.

Identifies the range of staff involved in the transfusion pathway and consequently required to have knowledge of transfusion. The BHNOG Education Strategy will focus on key groups and individuals to support and assist this delivery whilst understanding the training burden on HBs and the importance of engaging and innovative techniques to not only deliver the education but also embed the principles and promote the safety culture associated with safe transfusion practice.

* Both in hospitals and blood establishments

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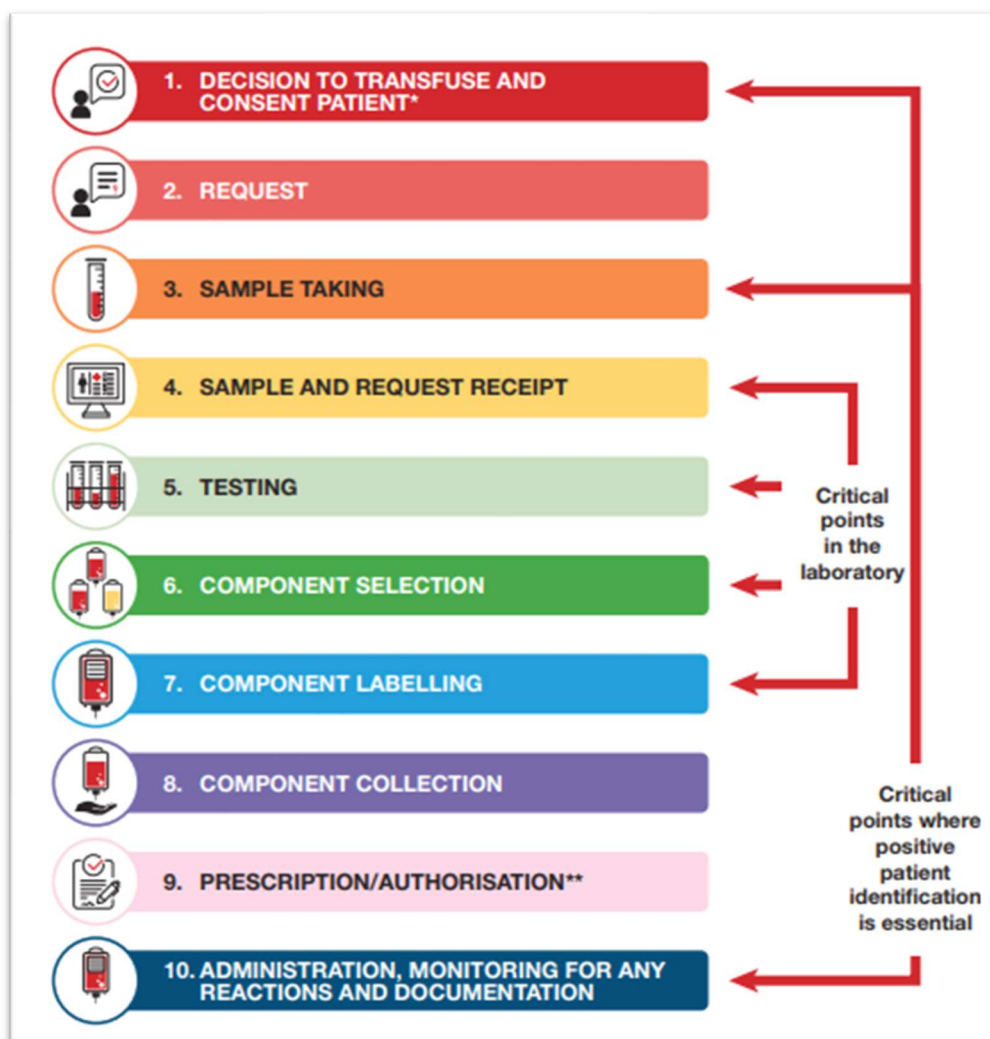
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2.2. How it will be delivered?

The number and range of programmes will vary to accommodate the diversity of staff involved in the transfusion pathway.

The Serious Hazards of Transfusion haemovigilance scheme (SHOT) has identified ten critical steps in the transfusion process which can be used illustrate the complex nature of the training and education required. (Figure 2).

Figure 2.



Reproduced by permission of SHOT 2020

Each step is an opportunity to provide both safe high quality care or for an error to occur which may contribute to patient harm. Understanding how each of these steps fit together and their interdependency on each other allows us to develop an education strategy relevant to the staff

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member and their role in the transfusion pathway based on safe practice and appropriate use of blood.

Furthermore each step can itself be broken down to provide a more intricate part of the transfusion pathway. Whilst it is not essential for each group of staff to understand all the individual steps this will be the case for some practitioners and it is critical that the education strategy and the BHNOG ESG understand where a holistic approach to transfusion is required and where a more modular approach is acceptable.

Whilst the BHNOG education strategy needs to include existing and regulatory programmes of work necessary to ensure compliance, it must also include consideration of new and innovative ways of delivering education including: digital ways of working, collaboration with other groups and innovative techniques for delivery. As previously mentioned the burden of training and education within the NHS is extensive and for many healthcare professionals transfusion is a small albeit significant part of their role. The challenge therefore is to develop training and education programmes which can promote safe transfusion practice and appropriate use whilst not overburdening staff with excessive training commitments.

An integral part of the BHNOG ESG remit will be to consider how to achieve this outcome and will consider the use of educational models to influence behavioural change⁴. (refer MINDSPACE).

To achieve a holistic education strategy that aligns with the objectives of both the BHNOG and the BHP, the ESG will oversee and monitor the work of the educational task (ET) groups identified in *Table 1* below. A number of these educational interventions are already embedded in the BHT/TP work programme. Other interventions remain at an early stage and will be reviewed and prioritised as required.

The ET groups identified in *Table 1* will form the basis of the BHNOG education strategy with regular reviews of programmes to determine their progress and any additional work required. These have been identified in the table as embedded programmes of work and prioritised programmes of work. It is envisaged that some of these groups will remain as constant programmes of work whereas others will have a defined life span. The Education Strategy Group (ESG) will be responsible for developing the overall programme of work and deciding the priorities. Each ET group will be facilitated by a member of the BHT or BHNOG and will feed into the Education Strategy Group. The ESG will produce a report for the BHNOG quarterly meetings.

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Table 1: Proposed Educational Task (ET) Groups

Status	Name/Description of Educational Intervention	Staff Group
Embedded	Non-Medical Authorisation of Blood Transfusion (NABT): qualification for advanced practitioner staff other than medical staff whose practice supports the authorisation of blood	Advanced practitioners whose scope of practice support this
Embedded	Senior Student Assistantship (SSA): 1/2-day practical training in transfusion practice converting theoretical knowledge into practical application	All 5th year medical students in Wales
Embedded	All Wales Transfusion Competencies: Collection, administration & pre-transfusion sampling competencies. Assessed in accordance with regulatory requirements.	Relevant staff groups involved in the transfusion pathway
Embedded	Specialist Registrar (SpR) Training: transfusion educational programme delivered by Welsh Blood Service to support SpR transfusion knowledge	Specialist Registrars
Priority	Learn Blood Transfusion (LBT): Established e-learning programme developed and managed by UK Blood Services. Currently investigating move to a different learning platform	Relevant staff involved in transfusion
Priority	SHOT inc. Human Factors (HF) Training: SHOT recommendations (2019) identified HF training. Development of toolkit for staff involved in transfusion	Relevant staff involved in transfusion
Priority	Scientific Training programme: Laboratory specific training package to develop transfusion skills of scientific workforce	Laboratory/Scientific staff
Priority	Future Nurse: Future Midwife (FNFM): education to support changes to undergraduate nurse programme from 2020 requiring specific transfusion training	Undergraduate nurses
Priority	F1/F2 Clinical education: development of transfusion programme for newly qualified doctors	Newly qualified medical staff

Transfusion Practitioner (TP) Competency Framework

An integral piece of work to support the Education Strategy is the development of a TP Competency Framework. Currently there is no standardised Transfusion Practitioner (TP) framework or formalised career pathway for TPs within Wales. The TP role is undertaken by a variety of healthcare professionals,

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whose duties and role definition vary between Health Boards and even between individuals working within a HB based on their diverse qualifications and local vision for the TP role.

The TP framework will provide a consistent approach to the TP role and increase visualisation of this key role in ensuring safe and appropriate transfusion practice. Clearer definition of the role, its developing structure and its requirements will also facilitate the change from the more transactional aspects of the post through to empowerment of a more strategic role within HBs.

TPs in Wales will be working with colleagues across the UK to develop and implement a consistent UK wide TP competency framework.

2.3. When will it be delivered

Effective education is primarily about delivering the right education at the right time to the right staff. The advantage of a well established, comprehensive transfusion education programme is that it will allow us to provide this for a range of healthcare professionals. By identifying and linking our current work plan with new and emerging priorities we will be able to take a proactive approach to the delivery of all Wales transfusion education and training programme.

3. Recommendations

The following recommendations are:

- ◆ To produce a structured and cohesive education strategy that aligns with the objectives of the BHNOG /BHP and its overarching work programme
- ◆ Establishment of BHNOG Education Strategy Group (ESG) to oversee individual Educational Task groups to ensure a cohesive and holistic approach to transfusion education across Wales
- ◆ Develop greater engagement and collaboration with key Healthcare professionals and subject matter experts to deliver effective and inclusive transfusion education programmes
- ◆ Understand the constraints on delivering education in the NHS and ensure the programmes are novel and innovative focussing on both educational and positive behavioural outcomes to embed understanding and change as appropriate

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4. References

1. BSQR: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/50/contents/made>
2. NPSA 14 SPN: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/862/Item21iAppendix1NPSASaferPracticeNotice141.pdf>
3. BHP: <https://wbs-intranet.cymru.nhs.uk/bht/wp-content/bht-uploads/sites/4/2021/10/Welsh-Health-Circular-NHS-Wales-Blood-Health-Plan-2021-English.pdf>
4. Mindspace: <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/MINDSPACE.pdf>

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Appendix 1

