

## **ENSURING A SAFE SURGICAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE PATIENT LIKELY TO REQUIRE AN INTRAOPERATIVE BLOOD TRANSFUSION**

Team Leaders: Mary E. Reak RN MSN CPAN, Katherine Houle RN MSN CPAN,  
Sondra Tschumperlin RN MSN CPN, Nancy Kase RN BA CAPA  
Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Background Information:** We serve a patient population which includes many complex pediatric patients who often present for surgery with an extensive list of comorbidities. When the surgical plan includes a spinal fusion, pelvic or femoral osteotomy, calvarial vault remodeling, or the patient has a known coagulopathy, there is a great likelihood that the patient will require a blood transfusion intraoperatively. Patients who have had previous blood transfusions are at risk for developing antibodies, which can make cross matching blood difficult and time consuming.

**Objectives of Project:** To ensure identified at-risk patients undergoing a surgical procedure have blood available from the blood bank prior to the administration of anesthesia.

**Process of Implementation:** Physicians and nurses collaborated to develop a policy outlining the pre-op requirements for preoperative antibody blood screening within 30 days of a scheduled procedure. Patients and families are notified of the need for a type and screen lab draw in writing, via the mail, along with their pre-op packet. The pre-admit testing nurses initially verify that the lab was drawn with the initial chart review. A second verification occurs at the pre-op phone call, approximately one week prior to surgery. A protocol was also developed that allowed the pre-admit testing nurse to generate an order for a type and screen test if not ordered by the surgeon.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** With the implementation of this policy and protocol we have risen to meet a new community standard. Hard stops have been called when the type and screen lab was not completed prior to day of surgery. We have had no incidents of delay in blood transfusion during or following surgery.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** This policy and protocol ensures that a delay in blood product administration, which would significantly impact our patients, will not occur, thus ensuring a safer surgical experience.