

2023 National Comparative Audit of NICE Quality Standard QS138



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Background

Patient Blood Management (PBM) is a multidisciplinary, evidence-based approach to optimising the care of patients who might need a blood transfusion. The deployment of PBM initiatives reduces inappropriate transfusion, which improves patient safety, reduces hospital costs and helps to ensure the availability of blood components when there is no alternative. Audit of PBM practice is vital to help an understanding the quality of care and to indicate where corrective measures are needed.

The Transfusion 2024 plan outlines four key areas for clinical and laboratory transfusion practice for safe patient care across the NHS. The strategy for PBM includes the development of a self-assessment tool for use by hospitals to allow assessment of compliance with the NICE Quality Standard, progress with the implementation of PBM and benchmarking between hospitals.

Participation



126 hospitals/trusts enrolled in the audit



3730 patients were audited

Key findings of 2023 audit



617/908 (68%) of the patients who were known to have iron deficiency anaemia prior to being admitted for surgery were treated with iron before surgery (compared to 59% in the 2021 audit).



900/1335 (67.5%) patients undergoing surgery with expected moderate blood loss received tranexamic acid (compared to 67% in the 2021 audit).



766/1205 (63.6%) patients receiving elective red blood cell transfusions had both their haemoglobin checked and a clinical re-assessment after a unit of red cells was transfused (compared to 58% in the 2021 audit).



Only 475/1356 (35%) of transfused patients had evidence of receiving both written and verbal information about the risks, benefits and alternatives to transfusion (compared to 26% in the 2021 audit).

Standards and Results

Audit Standard	Audit Findings
Quality Statement 1: People with iron deficiency anaemia are treated with iron supplementation before surgery.	617/908 (68.0%)
Quality Statement 2: Adults who are having surgery and expected to have moderate blood loss receive tranexamic acid.	900/1336 (67%)
Quality Statement 3: People are clinically reassessed and have their haemoglobin levels checked after each unit of red blood cells they receive, unless they are bleeding or are on a chronic transfusion programme.	766/1205 (64%)
Quality Statement 4: People who have had a transfusion are given verbal and written information about blood transfusion.	475/1356 (35%)

Recommendations



Hospitals should examine their procedures for implementing the NICE Quality Standard for Blood Transfusion. They should explore the barriers to their implementation and work to overcome them.



Hospitals should undertake regular repeat audits of the NICE Quality Standard using the National Comparative Audit and the QS138 Quality Insights tool as a quality improvement initiative.

List of resources

Resources that cover all the NICE quality statements audited

QS138 Quality Insights Audit Tool - A quality improvement benchmarking audit tool for hospitals to regularly self-assess their compliance to elements of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) QS138 Blood Transfusion Quality Standard
QS138 Quality Insights audit tool <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/audits/qs138-quality-insights-audit-tool/>

PBM toolkit information for clinicians <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/pbm-toolkit/>

Blood Assist App: blood component administration, available for mobile download on android and IOS, web-based version also available here <https://www.bloodassist.co.uk/terms>

QS1 – Iron supplementation pre surgery

Education for teams

eLearning: available on eLfh; ESR (certificates provides) or on the [Hospital & Sciences website](#) (no certificate provided):

- Anaemia - the only introduction you need
- Anaemia in primary care patients
- Anaemia in hospital patients
- Coming soon – Anaemia of inflammation and chronic disease modules

Business planning

Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN): 2022/23 – See CCG6: Anaemia screening and treatment for all patients undergoing major elective surgery
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/combined-ccg-icb-and-pss-commissioning-for-quality-and-innovation-cquin-guidance/>

Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) scheme for 2022/23 Annex: Indicator specifications – See CCG6: Anaemia screening and treatment for all patients undergoing major elective surgery
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/combined-ccg-icb-and-pss-commissioning-for-quality-and-innovation-cquin-indicator-specification/>

Toolkits & further information

Obstetric anaemia toolkit <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/obstetric-anaemia-toolkit/>

Pre op Anaemia: Guidance; toolkits; Information for patients (Anaemia, Iron in your diet); Quality Improvement; Bloodeducation; Research
<https://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/pre-operative-anaemia/>

QS2 – Tranexamic acid

Joint Surgery guidance

NICE Joint replacement (primary): hip, knee and shoulder NICE guideline NG157, June 2020: 1.4 Tranexamic acid to minimise blood loss

Full evidence base for Tranexamic acid ; research studies, financial analysis, benefits are available in full NICE NG24 guidance section 6, P75, [NICE Guideline Template](#)

QS3 – Reassessment after red cell transfusion

Implementation examples

Single Unit transfusion resources <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/single-unit-blood-transfusions/>

Guidance for when to transfuse

NBTC indication codes <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/the-update/revised-nbtc-indication-codes-for-transfusion-are-now-available/>

Blood components: Indication codes App, available for mobile download on android and IOS, web-based version also available here <https://www.bloodcomponents.org.uk/terms>

Information specific to implementing one unit transfusions to reduce TACO risk

NCA 2017 Audit of transfusion-associated circulatory overload <https://hospital.blood.co.uk/audits/national-comparative-audit/>

SHOT TACO resources <https://www.shotuk.org/resources/current-resources/data-drawers/transfusion-associated-circulatory-overload-taco-data-drawer/>

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QS4 – Verbal & Written Information for patients

JPAC website - Consent for Transfusion (Transfusion Information for Patients; Guidance for Health Care Practitioners involved in this role): [Consent for Blood Transfusion \(transfusionguidelines.org\)](http://transfusionguidelines.org)

Hospital & Sciences website - [Patient information leaflets - Hospitals and Science - NHSBT \(blood.co.uk\)](http://blood.co.uk)

SHOT website - [Patient Information - Serious Hazards of Transfusion \(shotuk.org\)](http://shotuk.org)

Blood Transfusion Training *Consent* elearning module - (replacing learnbloodtransfusion *Consent for Transfusion*) is available on [elearning for healthcare \(elfh\)](http://elfh) and the [Electronic staff record \(ESR\)](http://ESR)