SINGLE UNIT TRANSFUSION DECISION SUPPORT TOOL

For each red blood cell unit

Is the patient adult, haemodynamically stable, and non-transfusion dependant?

NO

Do not use this decision support tool

YES

Is the patient actively bleeding?

NO

What is the patient’s haemoglobin (Hb)?

LESS THAN 70 g/L?

YES

Transfusion may be appropriate*

Prescribe a single unit and reassess prior to prescribing any additional units.\(^{2,3,4,5}\)

Cardiac disease note: RBC transfusion with Hb > 80 g/L requires consideration.\(^7\)

INVESTIGATE & MANAGE

NO

BETWEEN 70 g/L AND 100 g/L?

YES

Does the patient have any signs or symptoms of anaemia that cannot be explained by another cause?\(^6\)

e.g. shortness of breath, fatigue, weakness, postural hypertension, tachycardia, dizziness

INVESTIGATE & MANAGE

GREATER THAN 100 g/L?

YES

RBC transfusion is unlikely to be appropriate.\(^1,2,4,8\)

INVESTIGATE & MANAGE

YES

Have the patient’s signs and symptoms of anaemia improved?

NO

Reassess

YES

RBC transfusion is unlikely to be appropriate.\(^1,2,4,8\)

ONLY prescribe one unit at a time.
Then reassess the patient’s need for further transfusion based on signs and symptoms of anaemia.

Rationale — Patient Blood Management Guidelines
Module 2 — Perioperative PP2, PP3\(^3\)
Module 3 — Medical PP2, PP3\(^1, 4\), PP6\(^7\)
Module 4 — Critical Care PP1, PP3\(^1, 4\), PP4\(^6\)

For more information

For support
Pathology Laboratory ........................................................................................................
Haematologist on call ........................................................................................................
Blood Management/Transfusion Nurse ............................................................................
Other ...................................................................................................................................

Abbreviations
PBM — Patient Blood Management
RBC — Red Blood Cells; Hb — haemoglobin
To be read in combination with the Patient Blood Management Guidelines

NATIONAL BLOOD AUTHORITY AUSTRALIA