

Section A: Informed Consent for Transfusion of Blood and Blood Products and Notification

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LHSC and St. Joseph's require written documentation of informed consent for the transfusion of blood and blood products:

- [LHSC Consent to Treatment Policy and Procedure \(PCC035\)](#)
- [St. Joseph's Consent Policy \(PCC002\)](#)

I. Guidelines for Consent

Discussion regarding blood and/or blood product transfusion should occur with any patient receiving, or likely to receive blood and/or blood products. This would include, but is not limited to ALL patients for whom a group and reserve or group and crossmatch has been ordered. The Health Practitioner proposing the transfusion, or the Health Practitioner proposing the treatment that may result in the need for blood transfusion, must explain:

1. The nature and expected benefits of the transfusion,
2. The possible risks and side effects of transfusion, and
3. Any alternatives are available to the patient, and the consequences of not receiving a transfusion.

Blood and/or blood products include but are not limited to the following: red blood cells, plasma, platelets, albumin, factor concentrates, immune globulins

[Patient brochures](#) and [physician information](#) on the transfusion of blood and/or blood products outlining the benefits, side effects, risks and alternatives to transfusion are available.

After this discussion, patients must be asked to give:

1. consent, **or**
2. refusal, **or**
3. consent with restrictions,

using the procedure and documentation outlined in the facility specific Consent to Treatment Policy.

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II. Autologous and Directed Donation Programs

The specific LHSC or St. Joseph's Consent for Transfusion of Blood and/or Blood Products Form(s) must be completed. Patients who have pre-donated their own blood, or for whom directed blood is available, need to be informed that they may require additional units of non-autologous/directed blood. If the patient/Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) refuses non-autologous or non-directed blood, the Consent with Restrictions part of the Refusal Form must be completed.

III. Refusal/Consent with Restrictions of Transfusion of Blood and/or Blood Products

The "Refusal/Consent with Restrictions of Transfusion of Blood and/or Blood Products" Form must be completed by any patient/SDM who has refused transfusion, or has consented with specific restrictions, wishes and/or instructions to transfusion. Health Care Professionals have a responsibility to respect the decision of any patient/SDM not to receive blood or blood products. Alternative treatment options and the risks of not receiving transfusion should be discussed with the patient/SDM and documented.

When the "Refusal/Consent with Restrictions of Transfusion of Blood and/or Blood Products Form" has been completed, it must be faxed to the Blood Transfusion Laboratory for documentation in their patient database. The documentation within the BTL database is reviewed each time a product is requested, crossmatched/assigned to a patient and/or dispensed. If a Refusal / Consent with Restrictions has been documented, the requesting physician will be notified that the patient has expressed their wishes for either refusal or consent with some restrictions.

The original "Refusal/Consent with Restrictions of Transfusion of Blood and/or Blood Products Form" is placed in the patient's chart.

It is not necessary to order a Group and Reserve for any patient who has refused all blood and/or blood products.

The Pre-Operative/Pre-Procedure Patient Questionnaire includes the question "Would you refuse a blood transfusion as a life saving procedure?" If the response to this question is "yes", the Health Practitioner proposing the operation/procedure, and/or anesthesiologist, as applicable, must be notified. A discussion must occur between the practitioner and the patient/SDM and, if applicable, the Refusal/Consent with Restrictions be completed.

NOTE: For general information on the Jehovah Witness refusal/acceptance of blood and/or blood products, see the following excellent website:
http://pennhealth.com/health_info/bloodless/000206.html

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IV. Written Notification of Recipients

All recipients of blood and/or blood products at LHSC and St. Joseph's will receive written notification from the Blood Transfusion Service at the end of each calendar month. The letter includes a brief explanation regarding the notification and a list of all blood products received, including date and unique unit number. Letters will be mailed to each recipient based on the address provided at patient registration. Exceptions to this include the following patients:

1. Deceased patients
2. Patients that have received ONLY one of the following products:
 - a. Rh Immune Globulin
 - b. Hepatitis Immune Globulin
 - c. Intravenous Immune Globulin
 - d. Factors VII, VIII or IX

A copy of the letter, to be placed in the patient's chart, is sent to Medical Records. Any undeliverable letters are sent to either the patient's family physician or the LHSC/St. Joseph's attending physician.