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Transfer of Blood Products to Outside Facilities - Blood Bank

Document Type: Procedure

I. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE:

This document will provide policies that apply when blood products are transferred to an outside facility.

II. CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

A. The Blood Bank must have a process to confirm that blood products being transferred to outside facilities are handled, stored, and transported in a manner that prevents damage, limits deterioration, and meets transport temperature requirements. Temperature requirements during transport of blood products differ from temperature requirements during storage as the process of transporting blood products is considered short term. Validated transport containers (boxes, coolers) and coolants allow for blood products to trend towards the required temperatures during transport.

B. It is the responsibility of the facility shipping a biologic or infectious material to properly classify, package, label, and document the substance being shipped as described throughout this document. It is also the responsibility of the shipping facility to ensure that all blood products are identified and traceable.

III. POLICIES:

A. **Documentation of Blood Product Transfers**
To ensure that all blood products are traceable, blood product transfers are documented in the computer as described in *Blood Bank CDM- Transfer Units* and on the applicable transfer form (depending on the original blood supplier). A transfer form must be documented for all permanent blood product transfers from this facility to another facility.

1. American Red Cross (ARC) Hospital-to-Hospital Accounting Form. Note that the check digits of the donor number must be documented on the ARC form.
2. Versiti Component Transfer Form
   Note that the original blood product codes (pre-modification codes) must be documented on the transfer forms. Refer to the Notes section near the end of this document and to the Job Aid: Examples for Documenting Transfer Forms for additional information.

B. **Printing an Invoice of the Transfer from the Computer System**
When documenting the transfer in the computer system, the computer-generated invoice should be printed and attached to the transfer form.

C. **Disposition of the Multiple Copies of the Transfer Forms**

1. The Versiti Component Transfer Form are single-copy forms. After documenting the applicable form, an additional copy should be made.
   a. Send one copy in the box with the blood products.
   b. The other copy is submitted to the Lead Medical Technologist/Supervisor or designee. The form will be faxed/emailed to the original blood supplier and will be saved for our records.
2. The ARC Hospital-to-Hospital Accounting Form is a 3-part form.
   a. Send the copy that states "SEND WITH SHIPMENT" on the bottom of the form with the blood products in the shipping box. The other 2 copies are submitted to the Supervisor/Lead Medical Technologist.
   b. The Supervisor/Lead Medical Technologist will retain the copy that states "SHIPPING FACILITY RECORD."
   c. The Supervisor/Lead Medical Technologist will forward the copy that states "SEND TO AMERICAN RED CROSS" to the ARC.

D. **Visual Inspection of Blood Products**

1. Each blood product must be visually inspected before it is transferred to an outside source. The visual inspection is documented on the transfer form and in the computer as described in Blood Bank CDM - Transfer Units. In the computer, the COND field is documented as either:
   a. OK (visual inspection passes), or
   b. NOT OK (not OK to place in stock/issue) if the visual inspection is unsatisfactory, which will place the unit in quarantine. If the visual inspection is unsatisfactory, the product should not be transferred to the outside facility but should be placed into quarantine or discarded. Refer to, Visual Inspection of Blood Products - Blood Bank for additional information.

E. **Blood Product Exchanges for Irradiation Purposes**
In some cases, other Beaumont blood banks may transfer a blood product to either Dearborn or Royal Oak blood bank for irradiation, and then Dearborn or Royal Oak transfers the product back after irradiating it.

1. This process is technically not a permanent transfer of blood products; it is only a temporary exchange; therefore the transfer form will not be completed and submitted to the blood supplier/collection facility.
2. The component transfer will be documented in the computer as described in *Blood Bank CDM- Transfer Units only.*

F. **Discard or Quarantine of Blood Products**
Any blood product that is not suitable for transfusion or that has an unsatisfactory visual appearance must be discarded. If a technologist has any concerns about whether a blood product is suitable for transfusion, then the blood product should be placed into quarantine. For additional information, refer to Blood Product - Quarantine or Discard.

G. **Transport Temperatures / Coolants**
1. For liquid RBCs, liquid plasma and thawed plasma, the container should have sufficient refrigeration capacity to maintain a temperature range of 1°C to 10°C. Bagged, wet ice is used as a coolant.
2. For platelets, the container should allow for the maintenance of a temperature range of 20°C to 24°C. Gel packs are used to help maintain this temperature range.
3. For frozen blood products, the container should have sufficient refrigeration capacity to maintain the frozen state. Dry ice is used as the coolant. Dry ice must be handled as described in the Beaumont Laboratory procedure Dry Ice Handling.

H. **Packaging and Labeling of Containers used to Transfer Blood Products to an Outside Facility**
1. The shipping container should be labeled with the shipping origin and destination.
2. Blood products must be shipped at the appropriate temperature as per section III.G. above.
3. Blood products should be transported only in qualified containers. Only blood product containers that have been supplied by one of our blood suppliers should be used to transport blood products from this facility to an outside facility. Shipments containing biologic or infectious material must be packaged and labeled based on the material's classification. Blood products intended for transfusion are classified as exempt human specimens because they generally do not contain infectious substances or are unlikely to cause disease in humans. The following packaging and labeling requirements apply:
    a. Each blood product must be contained in a leak-proof primary receptacle (the blood bag)
    b. The group of blood products must be contained in leak-proof secondary packaging.
    c. The outside packaging of the shipment should be of adequate strength for its capacity, mass, and intended use (the transport box).
    d. For liquids, absorbent material must be placed between the primary receptacles (the blood bags) and the secondary packaging. The amount of absorbent material must be sufficient to absorb the entire contents, so that in the event of breakage the outside packaging is not reached by the liquid.

e. For shipments containing dry ice, the outer box should be marked with "carbon dioxide, solid" or "Dry ice." The outer container must allow for the release of carbon dioxide gas. Dry ice must be handled as described in Dry Ice Handling.

I. **Ability of the Outside Facility to Accept Blood Products from a Supplier**
Before transferring a blood product to an outside facility, verify that the facility can accept a blood product that was collected by the applicable blood supplier. For example, the outside facility should have an agreement with the applicable blood supplier.

IV. EQUIPMENT / SUPPLIES:

A. Shipping container / box

B. Appropriate coolant (bagged wet ice, gel packs, or dry ice)

C. Absorbent material (for shipments of liquids)

D. Transfer forms (depending on the original blood supplier)

V. QUALITY CONTROL (QC):

A. Quality control of the shipping temperatures for blood products is performed quarterly in accordance with Transfusion Medicine procedure, *Shipping Blood: Temperature Monitoring*.

VI. NOTES:

A. The original blood product codes (pre-modification codes) must be documented on the transfer forms. To determine the pre-modification code, the technologist may:

1. Review the Unit History report for that unit to determine the original product code, or
2. Refer to the Irradiated Product Credit Job Aid.

B. In cases where the Blood Bank may require a credit for a blood product from the supplier for products not involved in a transfer. In these cases the blood supplier should be contacted before submitting the form, to determine whether the blood product should be physically returned to the supplier. The appropriate form should be used to submit the credit.

1. For Versiti Blood products, submit:
    a. The Versiti Component Credit Form (for a credit without returning the product) or
    b. The Versiti Component Return/Credit (if the product is physically being returned). In the Credit/Return Reason section, mark the applicable box ("broken", "expired", or "other" with a brief explanation).
2. For ARC products, submit the ARC form Credit Request for Products – Non-Physical Return. For example, use this form if an ARC plasma unit breaks in thawing.
3. For products from other suppliers (i.e LifeSouth, South Texas), contact the original receiving hospital, usually Royal Oak or the blood supplier for instruction.

VII. REFERENCES:

1. American Association of Blood Banks, Standards for Blood Banks and Transfusion Services, current edition.
2. American Association of Blood Banks, Technical Manual, current edition.
3. American Red Cross Work Instructions.
4. VERSITI Hospital Packing Instructions

Approval Signatures

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