CONSENT FOR BLOOD TRANSFUSION

POLICY:

When a determination is made that a patient will or may need transfusion of blood or blood products, informed consent for transfusion will be obtained from the patient, based upon the patient’s understanding of the necessity, risks, expected benefits and alternatives associated with transfusion.

SCOPE:

All Lancaster General Hospital (“LGH”) employees.

PURPOSE:

- To assist patients in making informed decisions about receiving blood or blood products.
- To ensure that LGH, its employees and members of the Medical and Dental Staff are aware of their respective responsibilities regarding obtaining patient informed consent for the transfusion of blood or blood products.

DEFINITIONS:

**Special Consent for Blood Transfusion** – Form LGH-0032. To be used to document the patient’s informed consent for the transfusion of blood or blood products from the LGH Blood Bank. **Note:** This form should not be used for albumin, Rho (D) immune globulin or immunoglobulin.

**Special Consent for Directed or Autologous Blood Donation and Release from Liability** – Form LGH-0032 (back). To be used to document the patient’s informed consent for the transfusion of directed and/or autologous blood or blood products.

**Denial of Permission to Administer Blood and Release from Liability** – Form LGH-0032-01. To be used to document patient’s denial of permission to administer blood or blood products from the LGH Blood Bank.

**Blood Transfusion Pamphlet** – Form LGH 153. To be used to assist the physician in providing information to the patient on the necessity, expected benefits, risks, and alternatives associated with blood and blood product transfusion in order to obtain the patient’s informed consent for or denial of transfusion.

**Blood Transfusion Information Booklet** – Form LGH-780-04. To be used by physicians in their offices to provide patients with the same information provided in the Blood Transfusion pamphlet (above), as well as the blood transfusion consent and denial of permission for transfusion forms, and information about the Autologous Blood Transfusion Program and associated forms and checklist.

**Adult Blood Product Order Form** – Form LGHA6962 To be used by physicians to document blood bank tests and products ordered with indications.

PROCEDURE:

General:

1. Upon determination that a patient will need, or may need, transfusion of blood or blood products:
   a. Information is provided to the patient in order to allow the patient to make an informed decision to accept or deny transfusion. The Blood Transfusion pamphlet / Information booklet will be given to the patient to assist the physician in providing this information.
   b. The appropriate form for consent or denial of permission for transfusion should be completed. These forms are to be used on all patients for whom a physician orders blood, and should be completed after providing information to the patient and prior to performing the type and crossmatch.

2. In an emergency, where an immediate blood transfusion is necessary to prevent the patient’s death or permanent harm, and the patient is physically or mentally unable to give or refuse informed consent, blood or blood products
may be administered at the discretion of the treating physician. If objections are raised by the patient’s family, or there are medical/legal concerns, the Hospital administrator on call should be contacted immediately.

3. Except for unusual medical/legal circumstances, denial of permission by a competent adult patient to administer blood or blood products should be honored. In case of an incompetent adult patient, consent to administer blood or blood products should be addressed with decision-makers as for any other treatment or procedure, and their wish should be honored. In the case of a minor patient, if the parent or legal guardian refuses permission to administer blood or blood products in a life-threatening situation, the hospital administrator on call should be contacted immediately.

4. For patients with a recurring need for blood or blood products during a continuing course of treatment, there is no need to have more than one consent form signed, unless either the physician or patient indicates that there has been a change in the information upon which the consent was based. For outpatients having transfusion on a recurring basis, a new consent form should be signed at least every six months.

**Physician responsibility:**

1. Identify patients for whom transfusion of blood or blood products is or may be necessary and order transfusion(s) – see #4 below. This should ideally occur prior to the patient’s admission to the Hospital or outpatient procedure, but may also occur in the Emergency Medicine Department, on a nursing floor, or in the operating room.

2. If need for transfusion is identified prior to admission:
   a. Discuss with the patient the necessity, expected benefits, risks and alternatives associated with transfusion. This discussion should ideally occur prior to admission. The Blood Transfusion Information booklet can be used to assist in this process.
   b. Review the above listed consent forms with the patient / significant others as appropriate.
   c. Obtain documented informed consent or denial for transfusion using the appropriate form.
   d. Forward the original copy of the completed consent form to the Hospital along with other paperwork sent for admission.

3. For patients identified for transfusion after admission,
   a. Discuss with the patient the necessity, expected benefits, risks and alternatives associated with transfusion. The Blood Transfusion pamphlet can be used to assist in this process. If the ordering physician is not available, a resident, or another physician responsible for the patient’s care should discuss the necessity, risks, benefits and alternatives with the patient.
   b. Obtain documented informed consent or denial for transfusion using the appropriate form. Hospital personnel may assist in obtaining this documentation.

4. At the time of transfusion, document the reason for transfusion and the order for transfusion in the patient’s medical record in the appropriate sections of the Treatment and Progress Record. Document reason and order for transfusion on the Adult Blood Product Order Form. Exceptions:
   a. Transfusion required during surgery – Physician may document need for transfusion in the operative report or on the Anesthesia Record, instead of on the Treatment and Progress Record. Order for transfusion should still be documented in the Treatment and Progress Record. A verbal order from the physician is acceptable.
   b. Non-emergent blood transfusion required at night – A telephone order from the physician is acceptable. A nurse may complete the Adult Blood Product Order Form, but the form must then be signed by the physician within 24 hours as per verbal order policy.
   c. Any urgent, life-threatening patient bleed.
LGH Responsibility:

1. Make the Blood Transfusion pamphlet and Blood Transfusion Information booklet and consent forms available:
   a. To physician offices
   b. In the Emergency Medicine Department
   c. On all inpatient and outpatient nursing units

2. When a physician order for transfusion of blood or blood products is obtained after the patient has been admitted, hospital personnel may assist the physician in:
   a. Educating the patient to necessity, risks, benefits, and alternatives associated with transfusion by supplying the patient with the Blood Transfusion pamphlet.
   b. Obtaining documentation of informed consent/denial for transfusion (i.e. completing the appropriate consent/denial forms).
   c. Providing the Adult Blood Product Order Form for physician use and follow verbal order policy as needed.

3. Make all transfusion consent or denial forms a permanent part of the patient’s medical record, whether they are received from physician offices or completed during admission. These forms are to be imprinted with patient identification information.

**Audience:** All Employees

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**Attachments:**

Consent for Blood Transfusion Brochure
Consent for Blood Transfusion Denial of Permission Form
Consent for Blood Transfusion Special Consent Form
Adult Blood Product Order Form

IMPORTANT: Current version is maintained in Policy Center.