TRANSFUSIONS IN PEOPLE WITH HAEMATOLOGICAL MALIGNANCIES – RESULTS OF A REPEAT UK NATIONAL COMPARATIVE AUDIT WITH IMPROVEMENT IN PRACTICE

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Background: Red cell and platelet transfusions are essential in the management of people with haematological malignancies and bone marrow failure disorders. Up to 65% of platelet components and 25% of red cell components issued are given to haematology patients, and most are used in the elderly. As the UK population is ageing, with a predicted doubling in people aged 85 years by 2041, only using red cell and platelet transfusion to those likely to benefit is imperative to minimise side effects, limit costs, and maintain the blood supply.

Aims: The aim of this national audit was to identify areas where practice has improved compared to the audit in 2016, and to identify areas that require further improvement.

Methods: All hospitals in UK were invited to participate in these audits of red cell and platelet transfusions in adults (≥16 years) with haematological malignancies or a myeloid failure disorder. The initial audit was undertaken in January 2016 and assessed the use of platelets and red cells against nationally agreed standards. Following feedback of results to all participating hospitals a repeat audit was performed in July 2017.

Patients with chronic anaemia were excluded from red blood cell (RBC) transfusion standards which used a haemoglobin threshold alone, as this group may require an individualised transfusion threshold.

Results: A total of 153 hospitals from the UK participated in the 2017 audit and provided information on 1553 platelet transfusions and 3830 RBC transfusions. 148 hospitals also participated in the 2016 audit.