8.1 CARE AND MONITORING OF TRANSFUSED PATIENTS

Patients receiving transfusions must be monitored for signs and symptoms of potential complications and any suspected problem must be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Prior to commencement of the transfusion, patients should be appropriately educated and advised to report to staff immediately any adverse effects that they may experience during or after the transfusion.

Severe reactions are most likely to occur within the first 15 minutes of the start of each component and patients MUST be closely observed during this period. It is preferable that the patient be located in an area where they can be observed by clinical staff throughout the transfusion. Unless otherwise indicated by the patient’s clinical condition, the rate should be no greater than 5mL/minute for the first 15 minutes.

As for all blood products the following observations MUST be undertaken and recorded in the observations chart in the medical notes:

- **T,P,R,BP** and O₂ sats **Base line** before the start of each infusion
- **T,P,R,BP** and O₂ sats **15 minutes after commencing** each blood component pack
- Then **hourly measurements** of **T,P,R,BP** and O₂ sats
- A final **T,P,R,BP** and O₂ sats at the **end of each transfusion** episode

Vital signs related to transfusion should be clearly indicated to enable the information to be retrieved later, if necessary.

Closer observation should take place for infants, unaccompanied children and patients who are unable to verbalise symptoms due to mental or physical limitations.

The possibility of a transfusion reaction should be considered in the event of any deterioration in the patient’s condition. For further information on Transfusion Reactions, Management and Classification see **Section 10 The Management and Reporting of Adverse Events**