

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum

To: Halifax Infirmery OR and Emergency Medical Staff, Health Service Managers, and Nurse Educators

From: Dr. Calvin Cheng, Medical Director Blood Transfusion services, Division of Hematopathology
Mrs. Natalie Chisholm, Technical Manager Blood Transfusion Services

Date: August 1, 2018

Subject: Change in Platelet Transport Bag

Standards for blood transfusion require platelets to be kept at 20-24°C at all times. 900 platelets are discarded annually in Canada, at a cost of \$250,000. This is due to improper storage after being issued to the clinical team. The most common error for nurses, physicians and transport medics is to place the product in refrigerators or blood coolers. Chilled platelets undergo modifications to their cell surface proteins which result in rapid clearance from the circulation if they infused after being cooled.

Platelets are in chronic short supply in Canada due to supply-demand mismatch. Effective August 20, 2018 Blood Transfusion Service will begin issuing platelets in platelet transport bags labelled 'DO NOT PLACE IN COOLER' to the OR, Emergency Department and with any cooler as available. This change will help ensure proper storage and reduce wastage. After infusion of the platelet unit please return the bag to Blood Transfusion services 6th floor HI room 6551.

We thank you for your cooperation in this quality initiative.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Calvin Cheng 473-3140