

Guidelines for red cell transfusion

Wall Chart

- Always diagnose the cause of anaemia
- Treat reversible causes of anaemia

Stable patients	Transfusion Threshold
< 65 years old with no cardiovascular or cerebrovascular problems	Usually only consider transfusion when Hb < 7g/dl
> 65 years old with no cardiovascular or cerebrovascular problems	Usually only consider transfusion when Hb < 8g/dl
Known cardiovascular or cerebrovascular history (previous myocardial infarction, angina, hypertension, heart failure, peripheral vascular disease pulmonary oedema,)	Usually only consider transfusion when Hb < 9g/dl

Patients with symptoms due to anaemia Unstable patients bleeding heavily Impaired marrow function	Transfusion Threshold
Symptoms (dyspnoea, angina, palpitations, tachycardia, orthostatic hypotension, syncope) likely to be due to the anaemia	Consider transfusion when Hb < 10g/dl
<i>Note - Tiredness alone is not an appropriate symptom for transfusion</i>	
Documented/obvious evidence of ongoing significant bleeding at time of transfusion causing symptoms as above or bleeding more than 500ml per hour and not stopping.	Consider transfusion when Hb < 10g/dl
Current or recent (within 3 months) marrow failure or chemotherapy or radiotherapy	Consider transfusion when Hb < 10g/dl

Patients should only be transfused to a target of 2.0g/dl haemoglobin in excess of the chosen threshold for transfusion above.

Consider patient's estimated blood volume and any ongoing bleeding.