

# Obtaining blood components in an emergency

## Blood Transfusion Procedure



### Purpose of this procedure:

This procedure describes how staff in NHS Lothian obtain blood components in an emergency.

Staff must also refer to the separate [NHS Lothian Major Haemorrhage Protocol](#).

### The Procedure:

If blood components are required in an emergency in the event of a major haemorrhage at RIE or DCN / WGH / SJH / RHCYP:

**dial 2222**

**state 'major haemorrhage' and the hospital site** you are calling from in order to activate the relevant site [Major Haemorrhage Protocol](#)

In the event of a major haemorrhage occurring on any non-acute NHS Lothian site, the patient should be transferred immediately to an Emergency Department

All staff must be aware of the Major Haemorrhage Protocol, which should be displayed in each clinical area.

If the Major Haemorrhage Protocol is activated, one person should take charge of ordering blood and communicating with the transfusion laboratory. This is especially important if several patients are involved at the same time.

Please be explicit when communicating about required timescales for components during a major haemorrhage i.e. state 'immediate' or 'within 30 minutes'.

Supplies of emergency O negative red cells for use in life threatening haemorrhage (if required sooner than the transfusion laboratory can issue components) are stored in the following locations:

- RIE ED satellite blood fridge
- RIE obstetrics satellite blood fridge

If emergency blood is removed from a satellite blood fridge the hospital transfusion laboratory must be informed at the earliest possible opportunity so that the unit(s) can be replaced. Additionally the member of staff in charge of the area in which the fridge is located must also be notified that the emergency blood has been utilised.

Be aware that the laboratory may issue uncrossmatched O positive (as opposed to O negative) blood in an emergency for female patients who are over 50 years old and male patients.

There is no requirement to obtain authorisation by the duty haematologist for the request and issue of non-red cell components if these are required during a major haemorrhage event. The duty haematologist can be contacted via switchboard for advice at any time during the management of a major haemorrhage.

The tear off blue part of the compatibility/traceability tag on emergency component packs must be completed with the recipient's details, signed and printed by one of the checkers, the date and time recorded and returned to the hospital transfusion laboratory by the agreed method of transport to confirm transfusion.

### **Associated materials/references:**

[NHS Lothian Major Haemorrhage Protocol](#)

[NHS Lothian Satellite Blood Fridge Policy](#)

[NHS Lothian Blood Transfusion Policy](#)

[NHS Lothian Blood Transfusion Procedures](#)