



# 7 BLOOD MANAGEMENT

This standard aims to improve outcomes for patients by using strategies that optimise and conserve their own blood, as well as ensuring that any blood and blood products that patients receive are safe and appropriate.

The revised standard focuses on patients who may need blood management as part of their care as well as blood and blood products.

## Why the standard is important

Treatment with blood and blood products can be lifesaving, and Australia has one of the safest blood supplies in the world. Comprehensive national regulations cover all aspects of blood donation, and processing of blood and blood products.

Patient blood management is the means by which patients' own blood is optimised and conserved. However, because they are biological materials, blood and blood products are not without risk, and their use can lead to complications and adverse outcomes for patients. Risks generally fall into two main categories:

- procedural errors such as patient mis-identification, blood sampling errors, or transfusing the wrong blood component
- reactions such as acute transfusion reactions (for example, fever, chills and bacterial infections).<sup>1</sup>

This standard aims to ensure that safe, appropriate, effective and efficient blood management systems are in place to minimise risk associated with the use of blood products. Patients' blood is a valuable and unique resource that should be conserved and managed well.

## If the standard is in place ...

- There are **systems** that ensure the safe and high-quality care of patients' own blood
- There are systems to effectively manage the **availability and safety** of blood and blood products
- The **clinical use** of blood and blood products is safe and appropriate
- Strategies are used to reduce the risks associated with **transfusion**.



## Changes from the first edition

The second edition of the NSQHS Standards streamlines actions and addresses gaps identified in the first edition.

The Blood Management Standard builds on the existing Blood and Blood Products Standard from the first edition.

The main changes are that the new standard focuses on improving outcomes for patients by improving their medical and surgical management in ways that optimise and conserve their own blood, and ensure that any blood and blood products they receive are appropriate and safe.

## Key steps you can take to prepare for the second edition

- Review and strengthen the governance systems for management of blood and blood products
- Review your current patient blood management strategies and identify areas for improvement
- Review the strategies used to manage the availability and safety of blood products, and identify areas for improvement
- Consider whether the use of blood and blood products is appropriate, and what strategies are used to reduce the risks associated with transfusion.

## Further information

A full copy of the Blood Management Standard, including the criteria and actions required for health service organisations to meet it, is contained in the NSQHS Standards (second edition). The NSQHS Standards (second edition) is available on the website of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care at [www.safetyandquality.gov.au](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au).

The **Advice Centre** provides support on implementing the NSQHS Standards for health service organisations, surveyors and accrediting agencies.

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## References

- 1 National Blood Authority. Australian haemovigilance report 2010: a report by the National Blood Authority Haemovigilance Advisory Committee. Canberra: National Blood Authority; 2010.

### **National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards**

The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards were developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care with the Australian Government, state and territory partners, consumers and the private sector. The primary aim of the NSQHS Standards is to protect the public from harm and improve the quality of health care. They describe the level of care that should be provided by health service organisations and the systems that are needed to deliver such care.

**The second edition of the NSQHS Standards were released in November 2017. Organisations will be assessed against the new standards from January 2019.**