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HCCA Feedback on ACT Health's Revised Blood Transfusions Information Brochure for Patients

HCCA welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on ACT Health's revised version of the Blood Transfusions Information Brochure for Patients. We acknowledge that many of the recommendations made in our initial feedback have been taken into account during the redesign process and commend ACT Health on placing a high value on consumer feedback.

The new layout is clear and the language is accessible and free from clinical jargon. In particular, we welcome the use of statements explaining that consumers should ask their doctors for more information about the procedure and alternatives. This is an effective way of ensuring that consumers are able to access all of the information they require while not overloading the brochure with information that will only be of interest to some people. The inclusion of examples throughout the document and pictures of the different blood components will also make it easier for consumers to understand the information.

It is also excellent to see that additional online resources have been included for parents of children receiving transfusions as well as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) consumers.

Main Brochure Heading

While it is understood that the title '*Patient Information – Blood and Blood Product*' refers to the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard to which it applies, this does not convey the purpose of the document for consumers. We suggest that the original title could be changed to a header in smaller font. Below this, a new title in large font could read '*Blood Transfusions: Information for Patients*'.

Informed Consent

Consumers need to be aware that this is their decision to consent to a blood transfusion and that they need to consider the information in the brochure carefully. Although there is an informed consent checklist at the back of the brochure, we believe it is important to include a statement early in the document explaining that a blood transfusion will not take place without the patient's prior consent (except in

emergency situations where the patient does not have capacity to consent). This could be included after the first section *'Why do I need a blood transfusion?'*

Cryoprecipitate

The last sentence explaining why a patient might need to receive cryoprecipitate is long and confusing. It would be helpful to break it up into two separate sentences.

What are the risks of receiving a transfusion?

It is likely that some consumers will be uncomfortable with the idea of a blood transfusion and may find the risks described in this section to be confronting. This is another section where it would be useful to include a statement such as 'ask your doctor for more information' in order to encourage consumers to discuss any of the concerns they may have.

The first two dot points need to include some indication of the likelihood of those risks occurring, particularly considering they are the most serious risks associated with transfusion.

What do I do if I am not feeling well....?

It would be useful to explain here that minor reactions to blood transfusions do not have any further serious implications for the patient once treated. Although minor reactions in themselves may not cause much discomfort, they may result in considerable anxiety for the patient if they believe the symptoms are an indication that something has gone seriously wrong.

After the list of more serious reactions, the brochure could explain what will be done if any of these occur.

Why do the nursing staff keep asking my name and date of birth?

We suggest another sentence could be added to this section such as 'if you think this procedure is not being followed correctly, speak to a nurse'. It is important to engage consumers in the patient identification process, as they are well placed to detect an identification error.

Where can I find more information on transfusion?

The word 'transfusion' is not capitalised anywhere else in the document, so it would make sense to use a lower case 't' in this heading.

We are happy to discuss our comments with you further,

Yours sincerely



Darlene Cox

Executive Director

Health Care Consumers' Association