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DEVELOPMENT OF A WORKBOOK TO INCLUDE COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS FOR USE IN
INTRA-OPERATIVE CELL SALVAGE TRAINING

J. Jones¹, C.A. Howell²

¹ *Welsh Blood Service, Cardiff, United Kingdom*

² *National Blood Service, Oxford, United Kingdom*

Background: Management of the supply of allogeneic red cells is an important issue in the UK with the deferral of donors due to the perceived theoretical risk of the transmission of vCJD 1. The Health Service Circular 2002/009 Better Blood Transfusion 'Appropriate use of Blood 2 instructed hospitals to 'review and explore' the use of effective alternatives to donor blood and the appropriate use of alternatives to transfusion, including the use of intra-operative cell salvage. A barrier for the widespread implementation of cell salvage has been the lack of a consistent approach to the training and competency assessments of operators. National Occupational Standards for cell salvage developed by Skills for Health 3 specify the standards of performance that people are expected to achieve in their work and the knowledge and skills required to perform these functions effectively.

Aim: To work with the National Occupational Standards to produce a practical competency assessment framework for intra-operative cell salvage operators in hospitals.

Method: Based on the principle of developing a 'toolkit', a programme of consultation was undertaken with 'champions' and national groups with safety and conservation in their remit, to review the following training issues:

- a) Essential components for assessment
- b) Frequency of assessment
- c) Method of assessment

Results: A training framework for cell salvage operators has been developed which incorporates the following components:

- a) Competency assessment forms for 'set up' and processing stages of ICS
- b) Guidance on completion of these forms
- c) A form for the trainee to complete when undertaking different processes
- d) A reflective log component

Conclusion: It was appreciated that the people undergoing training for ICS would require varying both factual knowledge and practical assessments. These have both been incorporated into the workbook. The toolkit is currently being piloted by a group of hospitals where intra-operative cell salvage is already established. Following the pilot and evaluation of feedback, the toolkit will be made available throughout the UK.

1 Llewellyn CA et al. Possible transmission of vCJD by blood transfusion. *Lancet*. 2004; 363: 417-421

2 Department of Health (2002). Health Service Circular on Better Blood Transfusion: Appropriate Use of Blood. HSC 2002/009.

3 <http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk>