To:       D-H Lebanon Physicians, Advance Practice Providers, Residents and Fellows,

Nursing; Clinical & Administrative Leadership

From:   Jonathan T. Huntington MD, PhD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer

Nancy M. Dunbar, MD, Medical Director, Blood Bank

Date:   Tuesday, March 1, 2022

Re:       SBAR: Red Blood Cell (RBC) Inventory

**Situation:**  Blood suppliers across the country have been experiencing critical shortages of red blood cells (RBCs) since June of 2021. In order to preserve of blood supply, D-H implemented use of more restrictive transfusion criteria on June 4, 2021.

We are pleased to report that thanks to support from employees and community volunteers, the D-H Blood Donor Program has dramatically increased RBC collections and our current RBC inventory is adequate.

We are now able to return to standard of care transfusion criteria on March 1, 2022.

**Background:**  The national blood supply remains at critical levels in some areas of the country due to reduced collections and increased demand. However, the RBC inventory at DHMC is currently sufficient to meet the needs of our patient population.

**Assessment:** Current evidence-based transfusion practice recommendations are to consider RBC transfusion in stable, non-bleeding medical and surgical inpatients with hemoglobin levels ≤7.0 g/dL (≤8.0 g/dL for patients with active Acute Coronary Syndromes (ACS)): [Transfusion Audit Policy: D-H Lebanon, #279](http://policy.hitchcock.org/dotNet/documents/?docid=35842).

**Recommendations:**

* Limit RBC transfusions in stable, non-bleeding patients by using more restrictive transfusion triggers: hemoglobin ≤7.0 g/dL for most patients; ≤8.0 g/dL for patients with active Acute Coronary Syndromes. The best practice alert in EPIC will alert providers when ordering RBC transfusions outside of these guidelines.
* Continue to order single-unit RBC transfusions for non-bleeding patients and obtain a post-transfusion hemoglobin level to assess response prior to ordering additional RBC units.

If you have questions, please contact Nancy M. Dunbar, MD, at Nancy.M.Dunbar@hitchcock.org.

**Reference:**

Carson JL, Grossman BJ, Kleinman S, et al. Red Blood Cell Transfusion: A Clinical Practice Guideline from the AABB. Ann Intern Med. Mar 26 2012.