

Transfusion Handbook

4.5: Authorising (or 'prescribing') the transfusion

<http://www.transfusionguidelines.org/transfusion-handbook/4-safe-transfusion-right-blood-right-patient-right-time-and-right-place/4-5-authorising-or-prescribing-the-transfusion>

4.5: Authorising (or 'prescribing') the transfusion

Blood components are not licensed medicines and their 'prescription' is not legally restricted to registered medical practitioners. There are clear advantages in terms of safety and efficiency in allowing non-medical practitioners, especially those working in specialist areas such as clinical haematology or oncology, to authorise transfusion in defined situations. A framework has been developed in the UK to allow 'appropriately trained, competent practitioners' such as registered nurses and midwives to make the clinical decision and provide the written instruction for blood component transfusion.

All transfusion 'prescriptions' (written authorisation to transfuse) must contain the patient's minimum identifiers and specify the component, dose/volume, rate of transfusion and any special requirements. It should remain a permanent part of the clinical record.