September 7, 2017

To: Chiefs of Service, Attending Physicians, Housestaff, Nurses, and Other Concerned Personnel

From: Zane Amenhotep, MD  
Division Chief, Blood Bank  
Barbara Haller, MD, PhD.  
Director, ZSFG Clinical Laboratory

Re: Documenting Informed Consent or Emergency Transfusion for Patients Who Require Transfusion

Whenever a patient is expected to receive transfusion (including red blood cells, plasma, platelets and/or cryo precipitate), a provider who is authorized to order transfusions must either obtain and document an informed consent to transfusion prior to beginning the transfusion, or document that the recipient requires an emergency transfusion for which consent could not be obtained without delaying transfusion.

In either situation, this documentation must be placed in the recipient’s medical record. (Hospital Administrative Policy 2.03)

Informed consent to transfusion requires a discussion (about the specific transfusion risks, benefits and alternatives of transfusion for the intended recipient) that takes place between a provider who is authorized to order transfusions and the intended recipient, or an appropriate patient surrogate, as designated.

Documentation of consent to transfusion requires the signature of a provider who performs the informed consent to transfusion, or who attests that an emergency transfusion was needed in the event that it not is possible to obtain informed consent prior to transfusion.

The current approved Consent to Transfusion Form (Form #5799916, updated 03/17/2017) is a two-page, double-sided form with separate provider signature lines for Informed Consent (side 1) or Emergency Transfusion (side 2). The completed form should be filed in the Advanced Directives section of the patient’s (recipient’s) medical record. External surveyors routinely look for this completed document in the records of patients who receive transfusion.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact Zane Amenhotep, MD at (415) 206-8240, or Barbara Haller, MD, PhD at (415) 206-8588.