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

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The pamphlet “A Patient’s Guide to Blood Transfusion” that is published by the California Department of Public Health has recently been updated to include more accurate information about the declining risk of transfusion-transmitted infection from allogeneic blood products. The pamphlet discusses risks of and alternatives to allogeneic blood transfusion.

The pamphlet is available in English or Spanish at the links below:
http://www.mbc.ca.gov/Publications/Brochures/blood_transfusion_english-print.pdf
http://www.mbc.ca.gov/Publications/Brochures/blood_transfusion_spanish-print.pdf

California State law requires that...

1. A physician, podiatrist, nurse practitioner, certified nurse midwife, or physician assistant, who is licensed in the State of California and authorized to order a blood transfusion must distribute this pamphlet to a patient whenever blood transfusion may be necessary as a result of a medical or surgical procedure.

2. The person who provides this pamphlet to the patient must document that this pamphlet was provided to the patient in the patient medical record. The disclosure section on page 2 of the current Consent to Transfusion form (last updated 03/2017) can be used to make this documentation.

Exceptions to this requirement include...

1. Patients for whom there is a medical contraindication
2. Patients for whom there is a life-threatening emergency. If an emergency precludes the patient from providing consent, the emergency consent section (page 2 of the consent form) must be completed.

Please Note: Due to improvements in the safety of the allogeneic blood supply, the clinical utility of autologous and directed blood donations is limited, and such donations should generally be discouraged. Usually a discussion with the patient about the risks, benefits, alternatives to transfusion and their concerns can allay any fears that may be prompt such requests. Also, please note that many individuals may be ineligible for these options. Current eligibility requirements can be found at www.bloodcenters.org. For those who are eligible and request autologous donation, the donation must occur at Blood Centers of the Pacific at least 7 days before the date of the scheduled procedure when the blood might be needed.

For additional questions or concerns please contact:
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