

Blood Matters report for blood management (or equivalent) committee

August 2023

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OFFICIAL

The Blood Matters Program is a Victorian State Government program run in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood (formerly Blood Service).

Strategic Plan 23–24

Goal:

Blood Matters goal is to use a collaborative approach to support and promote best practices in quality care and clinical safety in blood management. We aim for sustainable, responsible, safe, and appropriate use of blood and blood products for improved patient outcomes in Victoria.

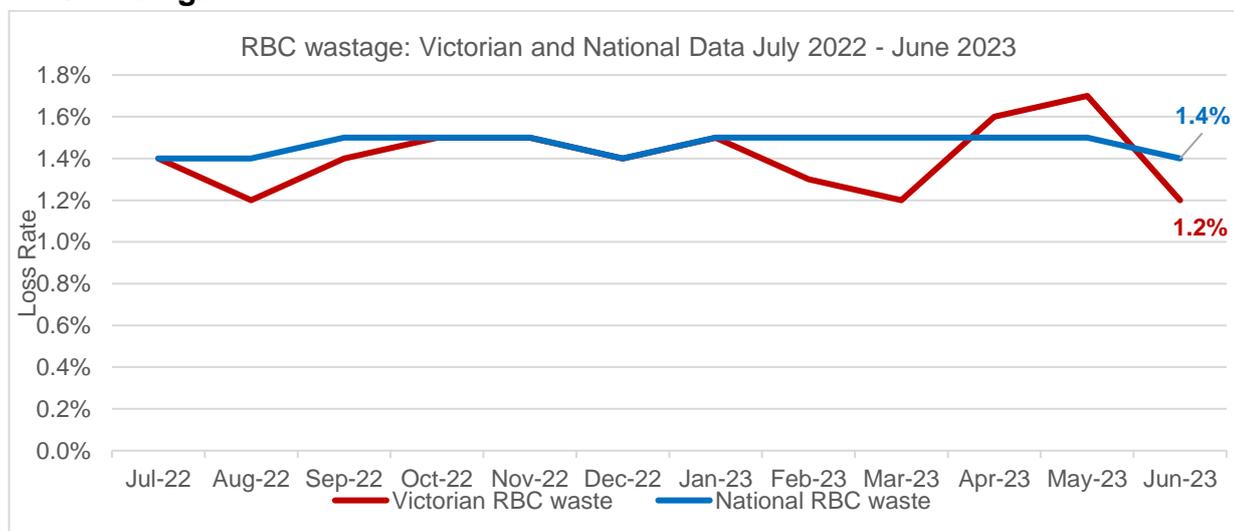
Objectives:

Use innovative and diverse approaches to:

- promote and support the development of strategies that optimise appropriate use of blood, blood products, or alternatives, and person-centred care through national and local governance frameworks and standards
- foster and strengthen partnerships and stakeholder relationships
- analyse data and disseminate findings across the sector to raise awareness, influence practice, promote efficiencies and equity of care, and provide value
- provide and promote expert knowledge sharing and collaboration across the sector, including specific initiatives, tools and specialised advice.

Blood stewardship

RBC wastage



April and May saw an increase in RBC wastage across Victoria. The main driver seemed to be an increase in discards due to non-compliant storage conditions. An important reminder that blood should not be collected from controlled storage until the patient is ready for transfusion to commence. RBC wastage rates were back down again in June.

RBC usage

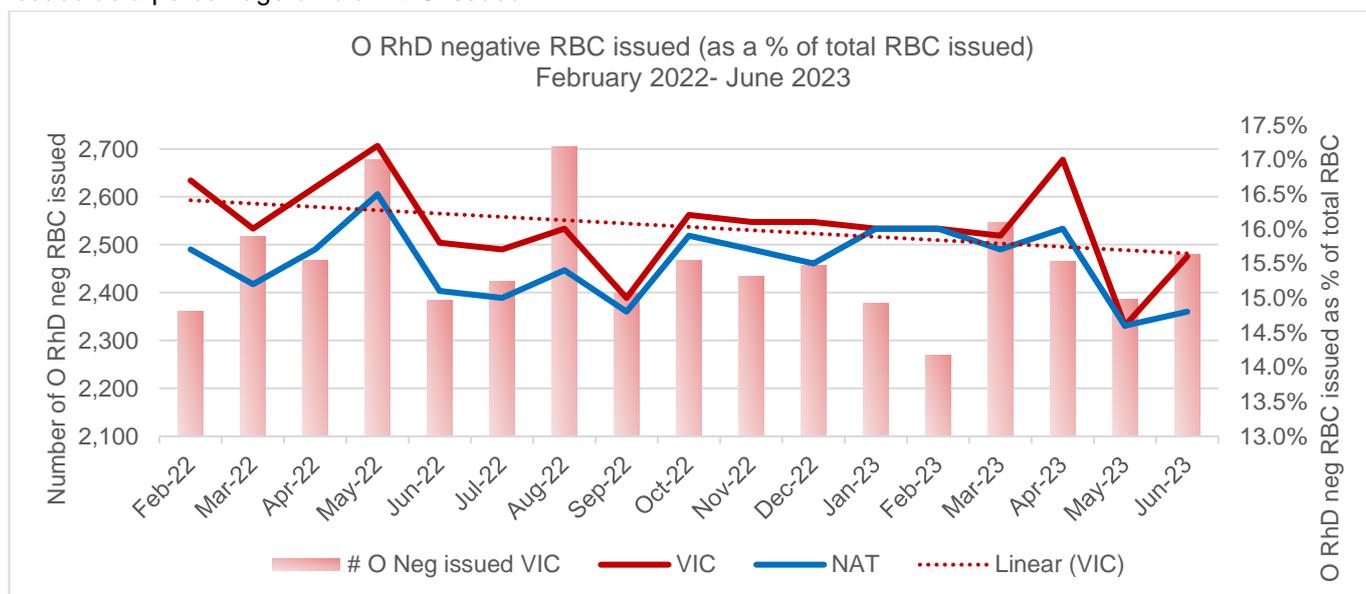
The number of RBC issued in Victoria in the financial year 2022/23 has increased by 4.9% on the previous financial year, equating to almost 10,000 extra RBC sent to health services in the past year. This has been the third consecutive year of increasing RBC issue rates across Victoria and nationally.

To assist with inventory management and sufficiency of supply, any insights into the drivers of these increases at your health service or future predicted increases would be greatly appreciated. Please email

rfrench@redcrossblood.org.au

Emergency use blood components

Many sites have either implemented or are planning to implement emergency use group O RhD positive RBC for females >50 and males >18 years over the coming months. While the Victorian O RhD negative RBC issue rate remains above national average, there has been a subsequent decrease in the number of O RhD negative RBC issued as a percentage of total RBC issued.



This has been of benefit with the recent inventory restrictions experienced. We encourage ongoing discussions and reporting of blood use at Blood Management Committee (or equivalent) meetings.

Group AB plasma products (FFP and cryoprecipitate) are also experiencing ongoing restrictions. Discussion around use of group A low titre anti-A/B FFP and group A cryoprecipitate to patients of unknown blood group at your Blood Management Committee (or equivalent) meetings would also be valuable.

Provision of emergency use RBC to Ambulance Victoria (regional and rural)

Ambulance Victoria have standardised the procedure whereby blood components are requested from regional and rural health services. Ad-hoc requests have been replaced by Ambulance Victoria paramedics requesting all blood components through Adult Retrieval Victoria (ARV).

The ARV Clinical Coordinator (ARV CC, a consultant physician) will contact the most suitable health service or transfusion laboratory to arrange for blood component pickup at an agreed time and location.

The procedure details appropriate cold chain management, actions for unused blood components, traceability and audit processes.

No changes have been made regarding the use or administration of blood components by paramedics. There is no anticipated change in frequency of blood component transfusion because of this formalised procedure.

The location of emergency use group O red blood cells (RBC) across Victoria will be accessed by the ARV CC through secure information-sharing with the existing Blood Matters' database. Please ensure Blood Matters is kept informed of any changes to your emergency group O RBC inventory holdings, including at satellite locations.

Blood management summit for scientists

We look forward to hosting an in-person blood management summit for scientists on Wednesday 18 October 2023 at Australian Red Cross Lifeblood Melbourne Processing Centre, West Melbourne.

The program will include a variety of updates and interesting topics of particular interest to scientists, including opportunity for networking and discussion with peers. A 'save the date' notification has been sent to transfusion scientists, with further information to be circulated once the program has been finalised.

Auditing:

Appropriate use of fresh frozen plasma (FFP) audit 2023

This is the first audit Blood Matters has undertaken with Australian Red Cross Lifeblood (Lifeblood) and the National Blood Transfusion Committee. The audit was undertaken using the Lifeblood Audit tool. The aim of the audit is to assess appropriate use of FFP in accordance with the National Blood Authority Patient Blood Management Guidelines and indications for use published at: [Lifeblood](#).

Health services entered data into the Lifeblood Audit tool ([Lifeblood audit site](#)). Data which did not contain any patient identification details was returned to Blood Matters as a CSV file (downloaded from the Lifeblood audit site). Data analysis is currently underway, and a report will be made available on the completion.

The Blood Matters audit was completed on 30 June; however, health services are welcome to continue to use the Lifeblood Audit tool for their own auditing purposes.

Serious transfusion incident reporting (STIR) system

STIR continues to receive reports of both clinical and procedural events from both public and private health services. These reports form the basis of our annual report, provide information for Bulletins (the most recent, [No. 9 Blood product checking](#)), education and conferences and provide data for the National Blood Authority Haemovigilance reports.

Changes to the reporting requirements for febrile non-haemolytic transfusion reactions have recently been made. Fever (> 39°C or a change of 2°C above baseline), occurring during or within four hours of the transfusion with one or more of the following:

- chills/rigor
- headache
- nausea/vomiting.

[STIR guide](#)

This does not change the reporting/investigation requirements for health services when patients become febrile during a transfusion. Review and investigation is still required to ensure a more serious reaction is not occurring and or overlooked.

The 2021-22 annual report will be available in September 2023.

For any health service in Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory or Australian Capital Territory not currently reporting to STIR, please contact Blood Matters at: Bloodmatters@redcrossblood.org.au if you wish to participate.

Blood Matters Project Nurse – subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SCIg) implementation project

SCIg implementation tools, resources, and health service SCIg contacts are available at: [Subcutaneous Immunoglobulin \(SCIg\) access program \(health.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/subcutaneous-immunoglobulin-sci-g-access-program)

SCIg patient numbers

The number of patients receiving treatment with SCIg continues to increase.



Currently in Victoria (Q4 2022-2023) there are:

- 21 sites with active programs
- 470 Victorian patients receiving treatment with SCIg
- 2701 Victorian patients eligible for treatment with SCIg by medical diagnosis

SCIg Forums

Two SCIg forums have been held this year with the last forum for 2023 scheduled for 15 November. At the June forum Dr Belinda Cruse presented “Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy: introduction and role of SCIg”.

SCIg promotion

SCIg promotion continued with an oral presentation titled “Could subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SCIg), a patient-centred treatment be an option for your patients?”, at the Cancer Nurses Society of Australia’s 25th Annual Congress which was held in June in Adelaide.

SCIg access for privately funded patients

A sustainable model for private patients in Victoria has been finalised with National Home Nurse (NHN) approved to offer a SCIg program, designed specifically for privately funded patients. Where individual approval is gained from the health insurer a NHN SCIg trained nurse will attend the patient’s home and provide SCIg self-administration education sessions until the patient is confident and competent to self-administer unsupervised. All required equipment and consumables will be provided by NHN and the SCIg dispensing fee will be paid by NHN to the pharmacy. Treating clinicians will continue to be responsible for ongoing patient reviews, updating BloodSTAR and providing the patient with a prescription for the SCIg product. For further information contact Anne Graham anraham@redcrossblood.org.au

Webpage update

The SCIg program, tools and resources webpage will soon be updated to reflect the transition from Evogam® to Hizentra® AU.

If you would like further information on SCIg or assistance with commencing or expanding a SCIg program, contact Anne Graham, Blood Matters Project Nurse, via email at: angraham@redcrossblood.org.au

Blood Matters forums

Blood Matters continues to support blood management/transfusion nurses/trainers and quality officers with the opportunity to get together and discuss current issues that affect us all. These sessions are being conducted second monthly as virtual meeting. Content includes Blood Matters activity updates, changes in the blood sector, network questions discussions, education, and journal club presentations as appropriate. An in-person forum is planned for October. Invitations and additional information will be sent out prior to each meeting.

Education

In March the Five in 5 blood management education series continued to receive strong interest.

- Total attendance across five days: 577
- Total individual registrations for all days: 669

A similar series of blood related topics was conducted for maternity care in May. All participants who responded to the evaluation (42) would recommend the sessions to others.

In June Blood Matters staff attended and participated in the first in-person study day since February 2020. The event was coordinated by Cabrini Health for their Blood Champion group.

Upcoming education events for 2023:

- Five in 5 blood management education series of 5 topics over 5 days will again be offered in October 23-27
- An in-person enrolled nurse (EN) study day is planned for November and includes practical sessions on blood administration and specimen collection.

Further information will be sent out closer to the dates.

Please contact the Blood Matters team (Bloodmatters@redcrossblood.org.au) if you would like us to participate in your education program.

Conferences

ISBT: The 33rd Regional **ISBT** Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden occurred in June. Blood Matters presented a poster, 'Collaboration and communication key elements of implementing statewide change to reduce O negative red blood cell use' and an oral presentation, ABO incompatible transfusions still a significant risk: 15 years of data from the Serious Transfusion Incident Report (STIR) program, Australia.

Blood 2023 will be held in Melbourne this year, a perfect opportunity to attend a great conference, learn new things and meet up with your colleagues in the blood management and transfusion area. The conference will run 5-8 November 2023, with a Transfusion Professionals study day on the 4 November. Blood Matters team have submitted three abstracts.

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Available at <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/blood-matters-program>