Integrating Transfusion Safety into Foundation Training: An Educational Initiative for Wales

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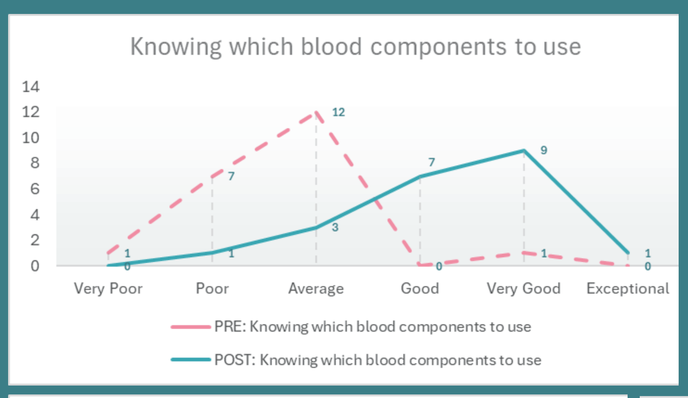
1 BACKGROUND

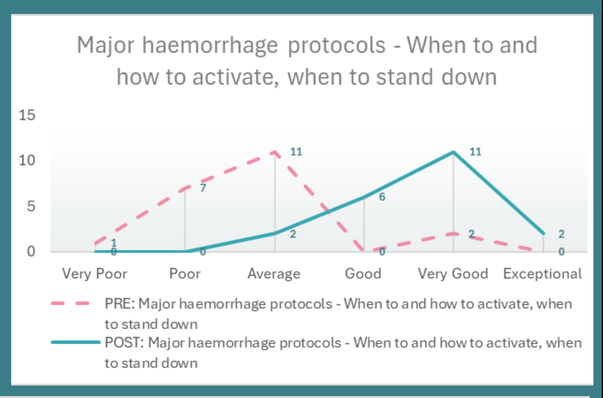
- The Blood Health National Oversight Group (BHNOG) oversees delivery of the NHS Wales' Blood Health plan (1). Transfusion education is a core aspect of this.
- Undergraduate transfusion education is already embedded; however, 50% of Welsh students leave to undertake their Foundation training across other nations.
- The BHNOG Education Strategy Group identified foundation doctor education as a priority in the education strategy, but lacked the resources to deliver it.
- The Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI) report (2) highlighted key recommendations around transfusion education.
- A Welsh Clinical Leadership Fellow was recruited to focus on addressing the transfusion education needs within Wales.

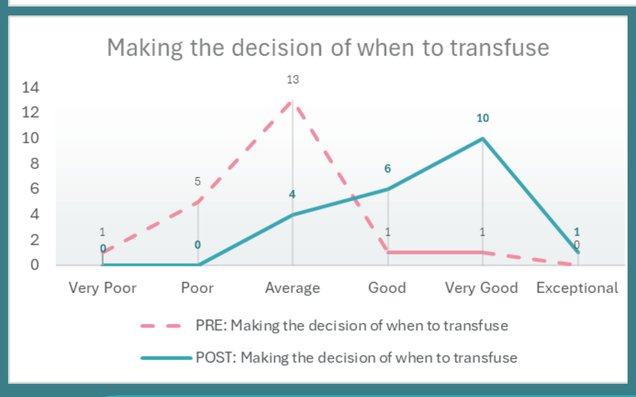
2 METHODS

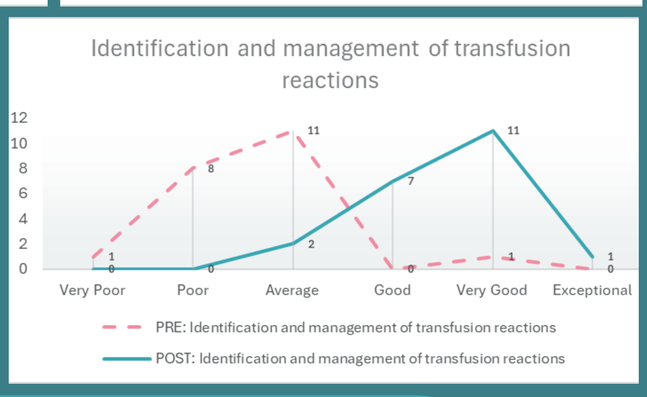
- A prospective national study of foundation doctors was conducted, revealing a knowledge gap and a need for additional training.
- A concurrent survey of transfusion practitioners identified unknown unknowns.
- Stakeholder engagement events were organised, and a collaborative working group was established with Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW).
- An education programme was developed using various learning modalities. It was evaluated through a formal review of the content delivery and educational value.
- A pilot was carried out at Ysbyty Gwynedd (YG), involving a cohort of new foundation doctors.

Figures 1-4: Line graphs illustrating the response to: "Please can you indicate your confidence PRIOR TO/ AFTER the session on the following statements."









3 RESULTS

- 144 responses were received to the national survey (28%) with an even distribution across Wales.
- 97.1% indicated a desire for further transfusion training in the foundation programme. Respondents preferred face-to-face teaching with experts and simulation as the most beneficial methods for future education over online e-learning modules.
- Three core topics were identified for development: Major haemorrhage management, transfusion reactions and which components to authorise.
- A versatile programme was designed which can be delivered in 1-hour sessions or as a 3-hour session. This includes various learning methods, including simulation and table-top learning. Pre-reading and a workbook were introduced on pre-pilot feedback.

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- Of the 21 respondents who undertook the pilot, 90% rated the learning experience as very good, 10% as good. Figures 1-4 depict learners' confidence prior to and following the pilot, indicating an evident shift in confidence in the four domains of transfusion education.
- 100% of respondents felt the session was interesting and engaging, the content appropriate, the tutors were engaging, and their questions were addressed.
- Formal assessment of learning is currently being undertaken with a bank of standardised questions designed to evidence learners' improved knowledge.

Figure 5 - Word Cloud depicting responses for: "What is the most valuable thing you will take away from this session?"

5 DISCUSSION

- A new transfusion education programme has been developed and tested for future integration into the Foundation curriculum in Wales. Learners clearly preferred face-to-face and simulation learning methods over online modules.
- The relationship between HEIW and WBS has been strengthened and reinforced, with a Wales IBI Transfusion Education Oversight Group (ITEOG) established to collaborate on further healthcare professional education.
- A new leadership fellow has been appointed to incorporate the programme into the Foundation curriculum in Wales and to develop the spread and scale strategy.
- Highlighting work undertaken in Wales to colleagues across the UK via UK IBI forums, there is scope to share learning and collaborate with partners.

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

The IBI report highlights inconsistencies in transfusion education among healthcare professionals. Wales has become the first UK nation to collaborate on developing and testing a customised transfusion safety education programme as part of its foundation curriculum. This has been created with careful consideration of feedback from learners and educators to ensure a strong design and improve the programme, ensuring it aligns with the identified user needs.

References

1) Blood Health National Oversight Group (BHNOG). NHS Wales Blood Health Plan 2024 – 2027 (2024). Available from: https://bhnog.wales.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/BHP-2024.pdf [Accessed 05/08/2025].
2) Langstaff B. Infected Blood Inquiry – The Report (May 2024). Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bb11f4fc8e12ac3edb0e2d/Volume_1_-_Overview_and_Recommendations.pdf [Accessed 23/07/2025].

Acknowledgements: We would like to acknowledge the collaborative support from colleagues within Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW), the Education Strategy Group (ESG) and the All Wales Transfusion Practitioner (TP) group