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Making transfusion education happen for nursing staff

In March 2019, a 2-day transfusion education workshop for 40 nursing staff from 5 Dubai hospitals was undertaken. This was a new and exciting initiative led by Dr May Raouf, Head & Medical Director at Dubai Blood Donation Center and ISBT Regional Director for Eastern Mediterranean Region and provided the delegates with expert speakers on a wide range of transfusion related topics and group activities to further their transfusion knowledge.

Education of nursing staff is vitally important as nursing staff are (usually) the final part in the transfusion process in ensuring the patient receives a safe blood transfusion. Many nurses administer blood to patients, and although they are very aware of the process required such as recording vital signs, or undertaking verification of the unit, they are not always aware of the science and theory that underpins this.

The first day of the 2-day transfusion education workshop for nursing staff, was opened by H.E. Dr. Younis Kazim, Executive Director, Dubai Health Corporation, Dubai Health Authority. His opening remarks were followed by a series of talks that ensured the nurses attending were given comprehensive information on crucial parts of the transfusion practice. All the talks were designed to provide the delegates with the theory underpinning their current practice. These talks included blood & components specification and clinical usage; blood component labelling and TACO, TRALI and GVHD. This talk generated a large amount of discussion with delegates encouraged to report all TRALI and TACO events to the Transfusion Laboratory.

Rachel Moss, Transfusion Practitioner, gave 2 talks; one on blood administration, roles & responsibilities of Transfusion Nurse and one on transfusion adverse events, reactions and complications.

The talk on ICT innovation applied to Transfusion Medicine prompted discussions with representatives in the room to consider some of the suggestions made by the speaker. Finally the whole group worked through

the blood transfusion procedure including the required IT processes.

The second day was a series of workshops, with many of the previous day's speakers acting as facilitators. Case scenarios were discussed and worked through, questions and discussions were encouraged and opportunities were given to consolidate the theory delivered the previous day. Finally each hospital were asked to set a plan for how they will take back the information they have learnt in the 2-day workshop to their own organisations to promote the safe transfusion message to their nursing staff.

To measure the success of the 2 days, delegates undertook a pre and post test to see if their level of understanding had improved and completed an evaluation form. Initial reviews showed that knowledge had improved, and the evaluation forms were all very positive. The final results will be fed back to the delegates local Transfusion Committees to show how beneficial to the nursing staff and ultimately the patients this workshop had been.

It is hoped that this exciting initiative can be replicated within the healthcare organisations in Dubai, with support from the local Transfusion Committees, so that all nurses who administer blood to patients are given the opportunity to learn the science and theory that underpins this activity, and so ensure patients receive a safe and appropriate transfusion.

More information on the role of the TP can be found on the ISBT website <http://www.isbtweb.org/working-parties/clinical-transfusion/>

