

How do you know that that the blood is stored correctly at the destination site, transported correctly and therefore acceptable for your stock inventory?

Andrew Levak (Regional Services - SA Pathology - Berri Hospital) – There are a range of forms that are used when blood is transported to and from the destination site. What I mean is that there are a range of forms that the laboratory send out with blood product that is sent to the hospital site and then in the situation where blood is returned from the hospital back to the pathology laboratory, there is a form developed by Country Health SA.

The template of this form is a mirror image of the form that the pathology laboratory has sent to the hospital. The details on these forms include what the donor numbers of the blood units were, the initials made by the person who has packaged and sent the delivery and then there is a section for the receiver to sign, date and check off the temperature upon receipt.

There are temperature strips placed on all shippers used in transferring blood product on sending to the hospital and on the receiving to the pathology bank.

So, I guess in those instances this is [done] to facilitate the transport of products and making the process easier the pathology couriers are able to provide the necessary equipment to the hospitals where the pathology laboratory is anticipating the receipt of blood. The laboratory sends with the courier, the shipper, ice packs and the temperature strip.

In terms of how we know the blood is stored correctly, Red Cross, in conjunction with SA Health and BloodSafe, have another form supplied which is a blood fridge maintenance record form. This is a monthly record sheet where there is a day-to-day check of recording the temperature, weekly alarm checks and a sign off to ensure the checking that documentation is completed. The fridge chart from the hospital blood fridge would also be checked and signed and then it is sent to the laboratory as well. So that gives pathology staff the confidence that blood is stored appropriately in that period.