

# 3 Alternative transfusion options

These procedures require careful planning, and cannot be carried out for emergency operations at short notice. Implementation of the procedure may only be carried out on weekdays.

## 1 AUTOLOGOUS DONATION

This option is an alternative to allogeneic blood for those patients whose general condition falls within donor guidelines, and whose intraoperative blood requirements can be reasonably accurately assessed.

Suitable candidates must be able to tolerate the rapid withdrawal of 450-500 ml of blood, and the longer-term reduction in haemoglobin levels. They should be over 50 kg in weight, have a haemoglobin level of 11 g/dl (Hct of 0.33) or more, and be between the age of 16 and 70. Older or younger patients may be accepted after consultation with the medical staff of the Service.

Absolute contraindications to admission to this programme include severe heart disease, severe respiratory disease and bacteraemia. Other conditions such as insulin dependent diabetes mellitus and patients on anti-convulsive therapy should be assessed carefully in conjunction with the attending physician.

The patient's doctor should initiate all requests for this procedure and refer the patient to the Regional Blood Transfusion Service. The procedure should be initiated about six weeks prior to the operation depending on the amount of blood needed.

## 2 DESIGNATED DONATION

Another alternative to allogeneic or autologous transfusion is the donation of the patient's blood requirements by family or friends who have compatible blood groups. However, in terms of voluntary self-deferral safety, this carries a risk of the exertion of undue pressure by the prospective recipient.

It must be reiterated that this is not an option in an emergency situation, as all blood must be fully tested before issue. Blood from relatives carries the risk of "graft versus host" disease and all blood from such donors must be gamma irradiated before transfusion.

**ALL SELECTED DONORS MUST CONFORM TO THE ACCEPTED VOLUNTARY DONOR CRITERIA.**

**NOTE:**  
Designated donation procedures will only be carried out on weekdays and within office hours.  
Because of the stringency of the testing procedures and requirements of irradiation at least 2 working days are required prior to issue.