

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### RESEARCH AIMS TO IMPROVE BLOOD USE DURING CHILDBIRTH

Australian blood researchers have completed a four-year study to improve the medical treatment of mums who bleed during childbirth.

In Australia, one in 10 mums bleeds excessively during childbirth, with 15 percent of those mums receiving a transfusion.

The Australian Red Cross Blood Service, the University of Sydney and the Clinical Excellence Commission have just completed a study that will help doctors better identify when, and to who, they should give blood transfusions.

Associate Professor Jane Ford of the University of Sydney, the study's lead researcher, said doctors varied about who they recommended for blood transfusions when it concerned women who weren't experiencing a life-threatening haemorrhage.

"This study will help improve the guidelines for use of blood in these situations and lead to better health outcomes for patients," Professor Ford said.

Blood Service Director of Research, Dr David Irving, said it was important to understand the usage of blood in the obstetric setting.

"The study looked at whether the quantities of blood given are appropriate, that blood is given under the right conditions, and what the outcomes are of those transfusions," Dr Irving said.

"By understanding how blood is being used, we can better inform clinical practice which is good news for new or expecting mums."

Dr Irving said further research would be carried out in the near future.

The study was supported by a National Health and Medical Research Council partnership grant of \$379,000 over four years and was conducted by the Blood Service and Kolling Institute at University of Sydney in affiliation with Northern Sydney Local Health District.

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**About the Australian Red Cross Blood Service**

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