

“Blood Bank – Up Close and Personal”

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“Blood bank—up close and personal” is the best way to describe this Focus segment. This section highlights the personal experiences of clinical laboratory scientists in two facilities. In both hospitals, changes have been implemented to streamline processes or track patient data in an attempt to reduce errors leading to adverse patient outcomes. Suzanne Butch’s article, “Applying Quality Improvement Tools in the Transfusion Service”, chronicles the formalized procedures used in her facility to redesign workflow. In addition to describing the steps in the process, she explains how staff are involved in the process—starting with soliciting data on project selection and continuing through post-implementation assessment. She also provides several examples of how to visually portray key indicator data.

The article entitled “Antibody Identification Summary Form” by Michelle Brown and Peggy Crim describes the development of an internal document for tracking the procedures used in complex antibody identification. They describe the rationale behind development of the form and the advantages provided by use of the new form. They emphasize the importance of the change within the blood bank and also describe the implications for and interactions with clinical staff. They provide a sample document and give examples of data that should be included on the form.

The personal slant of both articles demonstrates that change can be implemented in ways that solicit involvement from and benefits to the laboratory practitioner as well as provide enhanced patient care.

Linda A Smith PhD CLS(NCA) is the Focus: Immunohematology guest editor.

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