

Evaluation of Blood Transfusion in Anemic Children in Effia Nkwanta Regional Hospital, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana

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Blood transfusion is a common practice in sub-Saharan Africa as a way of correcting anemia in mildly and severely sick children. There are specific guidelines for the decision to transfuse a child, but often this decision is made solely by the caregiver or the physician. It is important that these practices are evaluated to ensure a safe and acceptable standard. A retrospective study was carried out over the 3-year period from January 2010 to December 2012. Medical records of children who were successfully treated and discharged from the hospital were collected. Information on age, sex, symptoms, laboratory diagnosis of malaria and hemoglobin concentration level were collected. Data were analyzed using EPI Info version 7. Results showed that transfusion was more common in boys (89 [63.12%]) than in girls (52 [36.88%]). The highest number of blood transfusions were performed on children younger than 1 year (66 [46.81%]). The majority of the transfusions were performed on children with hemoglobin concentration levels of 8 g/dL or lower. Children with malaria parasitemia (83 [58.88%]) had more transfusions than children without malaria parasitemia (58 [41.13%]). Fever alone (43 [30.5%]) and fever with gastrointestinal symptoms (33 [23.4%]) were the predominant symptoms among children who had blood transfusions. In conclusion, this study showed that younger children receive more transfusions than older children. Also, boys receive more blood transfusions than girls. In this study, it was observed that malaria was a major contributory factor for the requirement for blood transfusion in children.