



# Article of the Month

April 2018

## **Blood transfusion practice in the UK and Ireland: a survey of palliative care physicians.**

Neoh K, Stanworth S, Bennett MI

BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care 2018 (published online ahead of print)

This national survey of the Association for Palliative Medicine membership (n = 293, response rate 27%) sought to compare members' blood transfusion practice to the latest NICE guidelines, using 4 scripted vignettes. Less than half of respondents gave responses concordant with latest guidelines, and most were more likely to prescribe blood transfusion than NICE guidance would suggest is appropriate. Trainees were less liberal in their approach to transfusion than more senior physicians. The authors recognise that NICE guidance is mainly based on evidence from trials outside of the palliative care context, and that more evidence is needed to guide transfusion practice in palliative care.

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## **A framework for complexity in palliative care: A qualitative study with patients, family carers and professionals.**

Pask S, Pinto C, Bristowe K et al

Palliative Medicine 2018 (published online ahead of print)

The authors sought to understand what complexity means in palliative care using qualitative interviews with 65 stakeholders across the United Kingdom. Findings included the importance of 'pre-existing', 'cumulative' and 'invisible' complexity, and the complexity of interactions between patients, families, and professionals across different services. The authors used an ecological systems theory approach to understand how complexity may exist at different levels. They conclude that this more detailed understanding of complexity may help services to target resources where they are most needed.

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