Appendix N: Techniques for Quantitative Assessment of Blood Loss (QBL)

Quantify blood loss by measuring

- Under buttock drapes with graduated markings – may have to lift bottom of drape out of the kick bucket to see markings
- Graduated collection containers
- Account for other fluids (amniotic fluid, urine)
- At C/S hold irrigation until after blood loss calculated

Quantify blood loss by weight

- Make scales available in all delivery rooms
- Standardize supplies and establish dry weights of commonly used items (Chux, peripads, lap holder, etc.)
- Incorporate weighing of appropriate materials into routine practice
- Build electronic calculator into electronic health record (EHR)
Quantify Blood Loss by colorimetric analysis system

- Use of a computer system programmed with a color density-based algorithm to quantify hemoglobin content in cannisters, containers, and absorbed by surgical sponges.

Use formal estimation only if other methods are unavailable

- Record percent (%) saturation of blood-soaked items with the use of visual cues such as pictures/posters to determine blood volume equivalence of saturated/blood-soaked item.

(Photos courtesy of Leah Romine, RN and Jennifer McNulty, MD and used with permission)

This was adapted from the Improving Health Care Response to Obstetric Hemorrhage: A California Quality Improvement Toolkit, funded by the California Department of Public Health, 2015; supported by Title V funds.