**Text Box 2: Physical and Laboratory findings**

Documented meticulously in the clinical record on each visit, the following allows substantial understanding of the patient’s status.

* in children, height and weight and comparison with healthy siblings to identify potential growth attenuation commonly observed in thalassaemia; in adults, comparison to parental height;
* spleen size to permit evaluation of extramedullary activity, indications for increased intensity of transfusions, and/or consideration of splenectomy;
* in older patients, Tanner staging to permit identification of pubertal delay and failure and interpretation of growth pattern;
* in all patients, hematocrits and dates of each unit of packed cells administered, to estimate annual iron accumulation and the cumulative body iron burden;
* in all, pre-transfusion hemoglobins (by automated counters) including to identify early hypersplenism, evaluate growth difficulties, interpret marrow expansion;
* in children >4 years, bone age to interpret potential delays of linear growth;
* in all patients annual facial photography to record potential bony expansion.