

## **WHO Blood Regulators Network (BRN)**

### **Position Statement on Reports of Inferior Clinical Outcomes with Transfusion of Older vs. Younger Stored Red Blood Cells\***

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## **Position Statement on Reports of Inferior Clinical Outcomes with Transfusion of Older vs. Younger Stored Red Blood Cells**

The members of the WHO BRN are aware of studies that have suggested inferior outcome of transfusion therapy with older versus younger stored red blood cells in some clinical settings. However, other studies have not supported this observation. Prospective randomized controlled trials of older versus younger stored red blood cells are being initiated in some countries to address the current scientific uncertainty in this area.

Recognizing the present scientific uncertainty and the potentially major adverse impact on blood availability that would result from a dramatic reduction in shelf life of red blood cells, it is the position of the members of the WHO BRN that

- clinical and laboratory research is needed to determine whether there is a relationship between the storage age of RBC and the outcome of red cell transfusion in various clinical settings.
- Regulatory policies to reduce storage shelf life of red blood cells would be premature pending the outcome of prospective randomized controlled clinical studies.