

Blood safety: proposal to establish World Blood Donor Day

The Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA28.72 which urged the development of national blood services based on the voluntary, nonremunerated donation of blood;

Having considered the report on blood safety;¹

Alarmed by the chronic shortage of safe blood and blood products, particularly in low- and medium-income countries;

Mindful that preventing the transmission of HIV and other bloodborne pathogens through unsafe blood and blood-product transfusions requires the collection of blood only from donors at the lowest risk of carrying such infectious agents;

Recognizing that voluntary, nonremunerated blood donation is the cornerstone of a safe and adequate national blood supply that meets the transfusion requirements of all patients;

Noting the positive responses to World Blood Donor Day, 14 June 2004, for the promotion of voluntary, nonremunerated blood donation,

1. AGREES to the establishment of an annual World Blood Donor Day, to be celebrated on 14 June each year;
2. RECOMMENDS that this blood donor day should be an integral part of the national blood-donor recruitment programme;
3. URGES Member States:
 - (1) to promote and support the annual celebration of World Blood Donor Day;
 - (2) to establish or strengthen systems for the recruitment and retention of voluntary, nonremunerated blood donors and the implementation of stringent criteria for donor selection;

¹ Document A58/38.

(3) to introduce legislation, where needed, to eliminate paid blood donation except in limited circumstances of medical necessity and, in such cases, to require informed assent of the transfusion recipient;

(4) to provide adequate financing for high-quality blood donation services and for extension of such services to meet the needs of the patients;

(5) to promote multisectoral collaboration between government ministries, blood transfusion services, professional bodies, nongovernmental organizations, civil society and the media in the promotion of voluntary, nonremunerated blood donation;

(6) to ensure the proper use of blood transfusion in clinical practice so as to avoid abuse of blood transfusion, which may result in a shortage of blood and hence stimulate the need for paid blood donation;

(7) to support the full implementation of well-organized, nationally coordinated and sustainable blood programmes with appropriate regulatory systems through, in particular:

(a) government commitment and support for a national blood programme with quality-management systems, by means of a legal framework, a national blood-safety policy and plan, and adequate resources,

(b) organization, management and infrastructure to permit a sustainable blood transfusion service,

(c) equitable access to blood and blood products,

(d) voluntary, nonremunerated blood donors from low-risk populations,

(e) appropriate testing and processing of all donated blood and blood products,

(f) appropriate clinical use of blood and blood products;

(8) to establish a quality process for policy- and decision-making for blood safety and availability based on ethical considerations, transparency, assessment of national needs, scientific evidence, and risk/benefit analysis;

(9) to share information nationally and internationally in order to make clear the scientific, economic and social basis of national policy decisions related to blood safety and availability;

(10) to strengthen partnerships at all levels in order to accomplish these recommended actions;

4. CALLS UPON international organizations and bodies concerned with global blood safety to collaborate in promoting and supporting World Blood Donor Day;

5. INVITES donor agencies to provide adequate funding for initiatives to promote voluntary, nonremunerated blood donation;

6. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to work with other organizations of the United Nations system, multilateral and bilateral agencies, and nongovernmental organizations to promote World Blood Donor Day;
- (2) to work with concerned organizations to provide support to Member States in strengthening their capacity to screen all donated blood against major infectious diseases in order to ensure that all blood collected and transfused is safe.

Eighth plenary meeting, 23 May 2005
A58/VR/8

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