February 19, 2013

Dear Colleague,

With regard to the application of inclusion of Blood and Red Blood Cells (WB/RC) into the Model List of Essential Medicines (WHO EML and WHO EMLc), the Chinese Society of Blood Transfusion (CSBT) has sent a support letter on January 25, 2013. It was rather a simple statement, I wish to take this opportunity to further elaborate our positions as below.

WB/RC plays essential and irreplaceable role in clinical service in every health system. To add WB/RC into WHO EML and WHO EMLc will in general facilitate governments in every member state to fulfill their leadership and responsibilities towards blood programmes, which will further promote the safety and availability of blood supply. It is with this understanding that we give our support in principle to the application.
On the other hand, blood and blood components are intrinsically different from medicines, which are usually produced from raw materials/chemicals through massive and chemical systemization. To include WB/RC into WHO EML and WHO EMLc but without appropriate explication or differentiation will inevitably result in certain untoward consequences in all aspects of blood service including operational nature and supervision. In addition, the commercial sectors may infiltrate into blood service and weaken the funder mental concept of voluntary non-remunerated donation. It is therefore we wish that, before a final decision could be reached, a further full consultation with member states, international/national blood services/organizations shall be considered, all possible negative consequences shall be anticipated and effective preventing measures shall be identified.

Sincerely,

Dr. ZHU Qing Sheng
Chair, CSBT