



Position Paper

On

Voluntary Non-Remunerated Donations

A statutory objective of the European Blood Alliance (EBA) is to increase public and professional awareness of voluntary and non-remunerated donation (VNRD) of blood and blood components, and of preparation of blood components as an indispensable therapeutic means to help patients.

EBA's application of the principle of the donors' voluntary and non-remunerated gift for the benefit of the community is in line with policies of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the European Community (EC), the Council of Europe (CoE), and the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) who all advocate that these principles shall continue to be promoted, celebrated and respected.

EBA aims to strengthen the existing European policy which requires Member States to strive for 100% provision of blood and blood components from voluntary non-remunerated donors.

The European Community and the European Parliament stressed in their Resolutions of 14 September 1993, 18 November 1993, 14 July 1995, and 17 April 1996 on blood safety and self-sufficiency through voluntary unpaid donations the importance of ensuring the highest level of blood safety and has reiterated its continued support for the objective of Community self-sufficiency. In Directive 2002/98/EC the EC acknowledges that modern blood-transfusion practice has been founded on the principles of voluntary donor services, anonymity of both donor and recipient, benevolence of the donor, and absence of profit on the part of the establishments involved in blood transfusion services.

EBA underscores that for blood and blood components the better safety of VNRD has been established and remains relevant today.

Experts in transfusion medicine, policy makers, government and non-government representatives from across WHO regions as participants in the Global Consultation on 100% Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) of Blood and Blood Components, organized by the WHO in collaboration with the Australian Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, the Australian and New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, endorsed the Melbourne Declaration of June 2009 on '100% Voluntary Non-remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components'. The Melbourne Declaration is founded on the policies articulated in World Health Assembly resolution WHA28.72 Utilization and Supply of Human Blood and Blood Products urging Member States to promote the development of national blood services based on voluntary non-remunerated blood donation. It states that evidence supports that regular voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors are the cornerstone of a safe and sustainable national supply of blood and blood products sufficient to meet the transfusion requirements of the patient population.

A sufficient supply of blood components to meet the need of patients is best achieved with a 100% voluntary non-remunerated donor base. Highly developed health care systems are more likely to be associated with a 100% voluntary non-remunerated donor base. This has been shown for many years in EU Member States and also in countries outside the EU as for instance reported by WHO.

EBA acknowledges the need for a sustainable blood supply through increasing the number of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors who donate regularly, and recognizes that the establishment of well-organized and managed national blood services based on 100%

voluntary non-remunerated blood donations with effective quality systems will increase the safety of blood supply and that all the governments can achieve safe sufficient and sustainable national blood supplies by demonstrating leadership and commitment to voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.

It is EBA's objective to support a safe and secure supply of plasma based on the principles of voluntary non remunerated donations and in so doing will continue to make a vital contribution to health care systems.

EBA members actively support and provide help to those EU Member States where health care technology is developing. This includes assistance with the development of effective donor recruitment strategies, implementation of systems in Blood Establishments that comply with current Good Manufacturing Practice and with the development of systems to support the optimal, i.e. restricted use of blood components within hospitals. In addition to this technology transfer between EBA colleagues in the field, support is also formally provided by projects such as EUBIS, the DOMAINE and EUOBUP, sponsored by the EU Commission.

EBA signals that co-existence with paid donor systems can compromise the establishment of sustainable blood collections from voluntary non-remunerated donors and may negatively affect supply. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C 364/01) it is stated that with regard to the Right to the Integrity of the Person must be respected in particular: the prohibition on making the human body and its parts as such a source of financial gain.

EBA position

The European Blood Alliance aims for the provision of a safe and sufficient supply of blood and blood components based on 100% voluntary non-remunerated donations.

The European Blood Alliance recommends that the current policies requiring EU Member States to strive for self sufficiency of blood and blood components based on voluntary non-remunerated donation are to be enforced. Current initiatives in this area should continue to be promoted and supported.