World Health Organization

Concept Note

WHO LIVE WEBINAR ON STRENGTHENING BLOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH EFFECTIVE BLOOD REGULATION 3-6 AUGUST 2020

Background

A blood product is any therapeutic substance derived from human blood, including whole blood and other blood components for transfusion, and plasma derived medicinal products (PDMPs). Safe, effective and quality assured blood products contribute to improving and saving millions of lives every year. Access to blood products, which includes equitable availability and affordability, is imperative to safeguard public health. However, a major imbalance exists between higher-income and lower-income countries in access to safe, effective and quality assured blood products. WHO is strongly committed to the improvement of blood product safety, effectiveness and quality, and has provided a great number of guidelines, biological reference standards, training and technical support in past decades. Still, progress in blood regulation and availability has been slow in many parts of the world.

For that reason, the WHO Action framework to advance universal access to safe, effective and quality-assured blood products 2020–2023 proposes a renewed effort to scale up programme implementation and improve access to blood products. The first challenge in ensuring access to safe blood products, that has been identified and listed in the Action framework is deficiencies in national policy, governance and financing. The GDBS 2015 showed that only 60-70% Member States reported the existence of a national blood regulatory framework, with regional variations.

Member States Barriers to a well-functioning national blood system include, lack of political commitment and awareness of the essential role of a national blood system in the larger health system; inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks for a national blood system; and resource limitations. To address this challenge, an appropriately structured, well-coordinated and sustainably resourced national blood system should be established. A webinar on this aspect is needed to improve Member States knowledge and capacity to establish and sustain a national blood system that is integrated into the national health system, with clearly defined roles and accountabilities, and regulatory decision-making and governance frameworks.

Objectives and Goals

The Webinar is expected to improve country knowledge and capacity on how to strengthen blood systems through effective blood regulation.

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During the live webinar the following topics/presentations are planned to be covered:

(1) The Value of Blood and Blood Product and Elements of a National Blood Policy
(2) Review of Blood Regulatory Framework: EMRO experience
(3) Functions of the blood regulator
(4) GMP for Blood Establishments
(5) Regulation of blood/blood components as essential medicines
(6) Blood product standards
(7) Product testing
(8) Conduct of inspections
(9) Prevention of Transfusion Transmissible Infections: a) selection of donors
(10) Prevention of Transfusion Transmissible Infections: b) laboratory testing
(11) Elements of a hemovigilance system
(12) Country experience in building blood regulation

Expected outcomes:

Blood regulators from each country in coordination with Blood Establishment will be able to build effective blood regulation as an effort to strengthen national blood system.

Participants:

(1) Blood regulators officials from the Ministry of Health
(2) Responsible person for National Blood Programmes
(3) Directors of the major Blood Establishments

Webinar scenario:

This is a Four-day Live Webinar in English that will be translated simultaneously into all six WHO official languages. The recordings of the webinar will be posted on the website. Each day, the Webinar will start at 13.00 CET, with 4 topics in 3 hours.

The speakers are blood regulators from the Blood Regulators Network, as well as from American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), International Haemovigilance Network (IHN) and Paul Ehrlich Institute (PEI) Blood Train.