

Overall strategy for blood safety and availability

K. Boukef

Centre National De Transfusion Sanguine, Tunis, Tunisia

Introduction

Blood safety is one of the priorities of World Health Organization (WHO) and the strategy as defined by WHO is based on:

- well-organized national coordinated blood transfusion services;
- quality system in all areas;
- recruitment of safe blood donors; and
- effective testing and processing of all donated blood.

The facts

1. *What is the situation in our African countries?*

Forty countries had so far formulated a national policy and only 27 had implemented it.

In 2004, the number of units of blood collected was 2 219 976 (in 38 countries).

In 10 out of 46 countries, 100% of blood collected is based on voluntary blood donation. The number of whole blood unit per 1000 inhabitants varies between 0, 5 (CDR) to 19 (South Africa). One hundred per cent of blood is tested against hepatitis B and HIV in 90% of the African countries; but 100% of blood is tested against hepatitis C in only 54% of the countries.

2. *What is the situation in the Arab countries?*

The survey concerns 17 countries; 14 out of 17 had so far formulated a national policy and only 9 had national regulation.

In 2004, the number of units of blood collected was 2,400,000 (in 17 countries).

The proportion of blood collected based on voluntary blood donation varies between 3% to 100%. The number of whole blood unit per 1000 inhabitants varies between 0, 2 (Syria) to 27, 2 (Kuwait). One hundred per cent of blood is tested against Hepatitis B and C and HIV in the 17 countries.

3. *What about the quality management system?*

Many countries have started the implementation of a quality management programme, although only partially.

The strategy

The key points of the strategy for blood safety are the following:

- policy;
- safety and efficacy;
- access;
- rational use; and
- quality.

Policy

- A strategic plan based on the situation analysis must be written.
- A national policy must be adopted and implemented and regulatory texts promulgated.
- Norms and references must be adopted.
- A centralized and coordinated BTS must be implemented with:
 - adequate and functional premises and equipment; and
 - adequate budget.

Safety and efficacy

- Effective recruitment of safe donors through the use of appropriate selection criteria.
- Blood donation must be based on voluntary non-remunerated donors.
- Prevention of transfusion-related disease by testing all blood donation.
- Assure quality and safety in the collection, preparation, qualification, storage and distribution of blood and blood products.

Access

- Blood transfusion is an essential part of the health system; the whole population must have access to safe blood.
- Safe blood must be available all times.
- Safe blood must be affordable.

Rational use

- Blood must be available;
- Guidelines for the rational use of blood must be discussed and implemented;
- A good communication between BTS and clinicians must be developed through the transfusion hospital committee;
- A haemovigilance system must be developed.

Quality

The key points of a quality management system are the following:

- management;
- good manufacturing practice;
- documentation;
- monitoring and evaluation; and
- training.

In the presentation we will give some examples and success stories in some African countries.