

The Melbourne Declaration on 100% Voluntary Non-Remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components

The Melbourne Declaration on '100% Voluntary Non-remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components' is founded on the policies articulated in World Health Assembly resolution WHA28.72 Utilization and Supply of Human Blood and Blood Products which urges Member States to promote the development of national blood services based on voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and is supported by resolution WHA58.13 Blood Safety: Proposal to Establish World Blood Donor Day.

We, more than 65 experts in transfusion medicine, policy makers, government and non-government representatives from 40 countries across WHO regions met on 9–11 June 2009 in Melbourne, Australia, as participants in the WHO Global Consultation on 100% Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) of Blood and Blood Components, organized by the World Health Organization 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, and endorse the following Melbourne Declaration:

Recognize that safe blood and blood products and their transfusion is a critical aspect of health care and public health that saves millions of lives and improves the health and quality of life of many patients;

Recognize the importance of protecting donors' welfare and appreciating their generous donations of the gift of life;

Acknowledge that the realization of the health related Millennium Development Goals to reduce child mortality (Goal 4), to improve maternal health (Goal 5) and to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (Goal 6) is dependant on universal access to safe blood transfusion;

Recognize 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;

Acknowledge the need for a sustainable blood supply through increasing the number of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors who donate regularly;

Recognize 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 by reducing the transmission of TTIs;

Recognize that all the governments can achieve safe sufficient and sustainable national blood supplies by demonstrating leadership and commitment to voluntary Non-remunerated blood donation;

Believe that family replacement and paid donation can compromise the establishment of sustainable blood collection from voluntary non-remunerated blood donors;

Recognize that appropriate use of all blood and blood products and proper component manufacture and optimizing the utilization of recovered plasma is important to increase supply and for donor motivation.

We therefore:

Call for action to all governments to achieve 100% voluntary non-remunerated donations by 2020 as the cornerstone of their blood policies, in accordance with World Health Assembly resolutions WHA28.72 and WHA58.13, to appreciate and protect all voluntary non-remunerated blood donors, and recommend the development of a strategy for a stepwise progression from whole blood to labile components to ensuring that all recovered plasma is used for fractionation thereby fully utilizing every donation;

Urge all stakeholders, at national and international levels including national blood services, national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, blood donor organizations, patient organizations, other non and inter-governmental organizations, health industry, the corporate sector and civic society to work together with governments in promoting and supporting the recruitment and retention of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors and mobilizing more financial resources and technical support to achieve the goal of 100% voluntary non-remunerated blood donations in accordance with Millennium Development Goal 8 (Global Partnerships);

Strongly support that WHO advocate a co-ordinated, integrated and collaborative approach to planning and policy development to ensure implementation of a sustainable national blood system.

We declare that we:

Pledge to work towards and maintain 100% voluntary non-remunerated blood donations to provide universal access to safe blood and blood products for all patients requiring transfusion therapy;

Affirm our commitment to the achievement of 100% voluntary non-remunerated blood donations and the protection of donors' welfare in accordance with the ISBT Code of Ethics;

Commit to the establishment of effective and sustainable national blood services and voluntary non-remunerated blood donor programmes through working with governments and stakeholders to formulate, adopt and implement national blood policies consistent with national needs and WHO technical recommendations;

Undertake to work in collaboration in international efforts to promote safe and sustainable voluntary non-remunerated blood donor programmes that foster community engagement and benefit the recipients of blood and blood products.

Note: This declaration contains the collective views of an international group of experts and participants in the WHO Global Consultation on 100% Voluntary Non-Remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components, Melbourne, Australia, June 2009, and does not necessarily represent the decisions or stated policy of the World Health Organization, Australian Department of Health and Ageing, Australian Red Cross Blood Service, Australian and New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.