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NEW RESOURCES FOR VNRBD
New resources are available to support National Society blood donor recruitment activities.

Community Awareness: pre-donation education script

Red Cross / Red Crescent recruiters and volunteers can now access a customisable guidance script for conducting pre-donation education sessions.

This document is available for download in both English and French.

Access the Guidelines here: ENGLISH | FRENCH

COVID-19: Guidance documents on blood safety and donor management in affected areas.

As the situation regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is rapidly evolving, it is recommended that National Society Blood Services remain in constant contact with their own public health authorities to closely monitor their specific country situation and develop appropriate blood safety and sufficiency responses accordingly.

There are a number of websites with up-to-date information on the evolving situation which may be useful in planning your response to COVID-19.

- The recently published Rapid Brief White Paper from the Asia Pacific Blood Network (APBN) ([2019 Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2); Expected challenges and risks to blood safety](https://www.apbn.org.tw/sites/default/files/2020-02/Rapid%20brief%20white%20paper%20-%20APBN%20%20SARS-CoV-2%2C%202%20March%202020.pdf)) provides a comprehensive overview of key considerations and potential strategies for blood service decision-making regarding the management of donor, blood and staff safety.

Other examples of references include (but are not limited to):

- FDA [Important Information for Blood Establishments Regarding the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak](https://www.fda.gov/consumer/important-information-blood-establishments-regarding-novel-coronavirus-outbreak)
A journal article published in February 2020 by Australian Red Cross Lifeblood reported positive outcomes on the use of pre-donation water loading (drinking 300ml of water ten minutes before the donation) and applied muscle tension (crossing legs and tensing inner thighs and abdominal muscles for five seconds while maintaining steady breathing) during donation and the subsequent effect on reducing the rate of vasovagal reactions. Reducing vasovagal reactions impacts the number of completed blood collections, staff time, and the donor experience and retention.

**WATCH AND READ**

**Promotional videos – for reference**

Recently produced by the Norwegian Red Cross Society, this advertisement is a great example of a promotional tool that addresses people’s biggest fear donating blood: fear of the needle. The advertisement targets the male donor population.

Watch the video [here](#)

**Article: Reducing donor adverse events**

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Reducing vasovagal reactions impacts the number of completed blood collections, staff time, and the donor experience and retention.

Access the research overview [here](#)

**WHO Action framework to advance universal access to safe, effective and quality assured blood products 2020-2023**

The WHO Action framework for blood products 2020-2023 proposes a renewed effort to scale up programme implementation to improve global adequacy of blood donation, and universal access to quality and safe blood and blood components for transfusion.

Read the Action Framework [here](#)
IN DEPTH: IMPROVING THE SAFETY OF THE DONOR POPULATION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
It is important that blood services have strategies in place to reduce the incidence of Transfusion Transmissible Infections (TTIs) such as HIV and hepatitis B/C in the blood supply. In addition to recruiting voluntary non-remunerated blood donors and testing every blood donation (as two critical safety ‘checkpoints’), there are other activities we can also do to reduce the likelihood of blood-borne infections in donated blood.

Education and community awareness:
Donors should have access to as much information as possible before their blood donation so they can self-defer (elect not to donate that day) if they know they will not meet the eligibility criteria. Pre-donation community seminars can help with this. Posters and brochures containing basic donor eligibility criteria (such as weight and age range) can be used at blood centres and mobile collections to further inform potential donors.

Well-trained donor interview staff:
Ensuring staff are well trained in conducting the pre-donation interviews will also improve the likelihood of a donor fully disclosing relevant medical and lifestyle information.

Audible and visual privacy / facilities:
Every donor has the right to a confidential pre-donation interview. Allowing a private space means they are more likely to disclose relevant information than if others can hear or see (such as friends or family).

Retaining family replacement donors as regular voluntary donors:
As a core component of any program working toward 100% VNRBD, strategies should target altruistic family replacement donors to retain them as regular voluntary blood donors. First time donors are generally less safe than regular, repeat voluntary blood donors.

Not involved in full blood service provision?
If your National Society provides blood donor recruitment support for the national blood program, GAP recommends discussing these strategies with the national blood service to improve donor and patient safety in your country.

ANY QUESTIONS? CONTACT GAP
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