

THE EXPERIENCE OF BLOOD PROGRAMS: COVID-19

STRATEGIES FOR A SAFE & SUFFICIENT BLOOD SUPPLY DURING A PANDEMIC*

Please find below some suggested strategies that blood services and other agencies (ie. WHO, AABB, ISBT) have found beneficial during COVID-19.

Note. this list is not expansive and you will also need to consider which strategies are appropriate within your own country context.

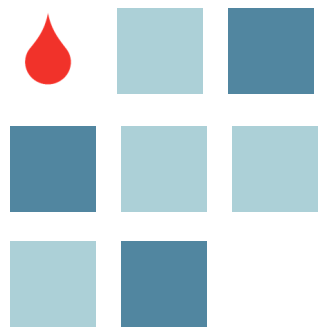
PUBLIC MESSAGING

Maintain regular and simple messaging to the public on: blood service commitment to extra safety measures, no evidence that COVID-19 is transfusion transmissible, blood donation is an essential activity, constantly updated blood need (ie. number of units required per month). You may also consider asking celebrities or political leaders to post themselves donating blood.



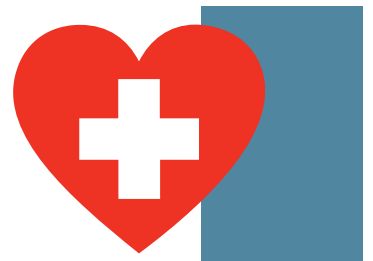
GOVERNMENT DIALOGUE

A dialogue with government / local health authorities can be helpful, informing them that blood is an essential medicine (WHO). Authorities may consider adding blood donation to the list of allowable activities and permit donors and collection teams to travel for this activity.



DONOR & STAFF SAFETY

It is important to reassure staff and donors on any extra safety measures in place. Some of these may include reviewing the donor deferral policy, using donation-by-appointment (limiting walk-ins), providing extra sanitation and hand-washing facilities, individually wrapped donor refreshments, and further space between donor beds.



HOSPITALS & CLINICIANS

Establishing and maintaining dialogue with hospitals / clinicians can be very helpful to match blood supply with demand. Clinicians can also be encouraged to adhere to effective patient blood management, and consider using alternative measures to blood transfusion in times of shortage if possible. A reduction of non-emergency services (ie. elective surgery) may also be considered, if necessary.



EVALUATE RESPONSE OFTEN

*The situation regarding COVID-19 is evolving rapidly and strategies will change. It is recommended National Society Blood Services remain in constant contact with their own public health authorities to closely monitor the situation in their own country and develop responses accordingly. Contact GAP for more information.

