



C.K. Mishra, IAS

Additional Secretary &

Mission Director, NHM

Telefax : 23061066, 23063809

E-mail : asmd-mohfw@nic.in



संघीय सरकार
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय
निर्माण भवन, नई दिल्ली - 110011
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi - 110011

D.O. No. Z-18015/18/2014-H (NBC)

Dated: 23rd January, 2015

Dear Principal Secretary,

Sub:- Blood Donation awareness campaign for creating Voluntary Blood Donation (VBD) movement.

Voluntary Blood donors are the cornerstone of a safe and adequate supply of blood and blood products. The safest blood donors are voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors from low-risk populations.

Despite this notion, family/replacement donors still provide more than 45% of the blood collected in India. Such donors are supposed to be associated with a significantly higher prevalence of transfusion-transmissible infections (TTIs) including HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis and malaria. Thus, one of our key strategies to enhance blood safety is to focus on motivating non-remunerated blood donors and phasing out even replacement donors.

In view of the shortage in availability of blood across the country the importance of awareness for Voluntary Blood Donation (VBD) can hardly be overestimated.

Optimum awareness and IEC activities can play a pivotal role in creating the required awareness. States/ UTs are encouraged to have appropriate plan for creating such awareness including by having a Brand Ambassador to carry out such activities.

A plan of action has been prepared for creating such awareness and annexed alongwith this letter. State Governments are requested to make use of the same for preparing an action plan for their States and may seek funding under the NHM for its implementation.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely

C.K. Mishra
(C. K. Mishra) 23/1/15

Secretary/Principal Secretary (Health) of all States/UTs.

PLAN OF ACTION:

The aim is to increase voluntary blood donation so there is sufficient supply of blood in Blood banks as well as FRUs. The onus of supply of blood lies with the blood bank rather on Patients. States need to develop their action plan accordingly and may inform blood cell division for further strengthening of the programme. Public relation officers posted at the divisional level reporting to state Health Societies need to implement these plans to fill the gaps between demand and supply.

1. Need Assessment :

Need assessment is to be done to identify the gap between demand and supply that can be bridged by planned donor recruitment. A Directory of NGOs and agencies engaged in the field will need to be prepared and made available to State Health /UT Government. Requirement of blood units in the districts need to be assessed as per the facilities available in the districts as well as FRUs and the requirement may be calculated by the utilization of blood units in districts hospitals, nursing homes and other PHC and CHC.

2. Education :

- a) There should be a planned programme to create awareness amongst the general public so as to ensure a regular supply of good quality blood without having to experience seasonal shortages. The educational programme, therefore, should be so designed that the community understands in depth the advantage of regular blood donations.
- b) The donor education and information material, donor questionnaire and donor consent forms should be prepared by the state Health Societies in simple language and translated for use in local areas

3. Awareness campaigns for the people:

- a) Education programmes in schools where a community of future blood donors could be created.
- b) Short-term training courses for donor motivators, social activists, trainers, blood bank personnel and volunteers who have an aptitude to serve the cause.

4. Donor Motivation

The underlying principle of donor motivation is to make the voluntary blood donor feel important and needed. It should aim at creating general awareness and to imbibe essence of firm determination in the minds of the potential donors. Any hesitance on the part of the donor will have to be tackled skillfully. The motivation of donors should be carried out as follows:

- a) By holding symposia, seminars, talks, discussions, get-togethers and street corner meetings at regular intervals.

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- b) By displaying posters and hoardings at prominent places. These hoardings and posters should be appropriate and attractive and should be replaced at regular intervals.
- c) By holding competitive contests and public exhibitions.

Following groups may be targeted for motivations:

Educational Institutions, Industrial and Commercial House, Social and cultural organizations, Religious and spiritual groups. Political organizations, uniformed services, Medical Institutions, Women's organizations, Fan groups (Film artists or Sportsmen) and Government organizations.

5. Donations:

One Key secret of the success of blood donor recruitment is to go to the donor, rather than expecting the donor to come to the blood bank. The policy for blood donations aims at:

- a) Organizing and holding blood donation camps in camps in centers of public assembly, viz. educational institutions, youth groups, offices, factories, etc.
- b) By identifying and popularizing specific ways of motivation of different communities and social groups. Blood donation drives should be evenly spread out throughout the year.
- c) Voluntary donations at the Blood banks will continue to be encouraged.

6. Recognition

Blood donors should be treated as a valuable resource and deserve courtesy and recognition. The policy therefore, should aim at rewarding and honouring donors and donor organization through awards, certificates, badges and trophies.

A list of honoured donors and panel donors should be compiled and maintained by the blood banks and may be submitted to the state health Societies for further necessary actions

Preference may be provided to blood donors identified by the Blood Bank for queues in hospitals, banks railway booking centres, etc. States may give extra beneficiary facilities to the blood donors specially in the hospitals.

7. Media

Mass media approach for raising the awareness of the people and sensitizing them towards their participations is the most effective way to mobilize voluntary blood donation. All channels of media therefore, have to be utilized fully through mobilise the media there should be a three pronged approach:

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- a) Mass approach: Newspaper advertisement, articles, supplementary/articles in periodicals, journals, house magazines, stickers, posters, hoardings, radio programmes and TV sports should be used extensively.
- b) Group approach: Use of audio visual aids like posters, stickers, folders and hoardings are useful.
- c) Personal approach: Letters, face-to-face discussion, distribution of campaign material, newsletters, bulletins, telephone requests for repeat donation give good results.

8. Database of Donors

- a) To maintain a detailed database of names, addresses and contact numbers of blood donor organization and also data base of blood donors for ready and easy access at the time of need. E- Blood banking in the states may be initiated where the rare blood group donor registries may be maintained. E- Blood banking will also help the patients to get the blood with in the adequate time.
- b) To network between the states so as to make data on blood donors available to the State Government and donor organization.
- c) The blood donor's cards are being honoured by each blood bank of the state as well as the neighbor's state.

9. Interaction and sharing of experiences:

All efforts should be made to facilitate blood donor organizations and blood donors to interact and share experiences by holding conferences, workshop, seminars, consultative meetings, colloquiums etc. these would help in bringing the organizations together and sharing information and experience on related areas.

10. Publications:

- a) The State should bring out a quarterly News Bulletin (bulletins in different regional languages) for wide circulation.
- b) Regular publications of annual, six monthly and quarterly reports should be brought out and distributed for extensive publicity purposes by State Health Societies.
- c) Publications of working manuals for voluntary workers, guide books for blood bank associates and for teaching personnel in adequate quantities for circulation.

11. Policy regarding legislation and regulations:

Regulations governing blood services should encompass the infrastructure facilities including manpower, equipment, space, and testing as well as donor selection procedures. The regulations must be in line with the Drug & Cosmetic Act, 1940.

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12. Donor Organizers:

Individuals involved in organizing blood donation campaigns should be provided adequate training in communication skills and motivations. Office infra-structure, telephone, vehicle, staff are essential to make them effective.

All Blood Bank staff should be properly and smartly dressed, polite, sympathetic and trained in public relations.
