



ABC NEWSLETTER

CURRENT EVENTS AND TRENDS IN BLOOD SERVICES

Visit ABC's Web site at: www.americasblood.org

2022 #41

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Please Note: The ABC Newsletter will not be published on Nov. 25th. We will resume regular publication on Dec. 2nd. Thank you for your continued interest.

Communicating & Framing the Shift to Individual Risk-based Deferrals

In December 2020, the United Kingdom (UK) [announced](#) a policy change to an individual risk-based approach to blood donor deferrals removing the existing three-month deferral for sexually active gay and bisexual men. Researchers in *Transfusion* recently published a [paper](#) investigating the “challenge of how best to frame communications about such a policy change to minimize potential negative consequences (e.g., putting people off donating).” They sought to understand and identify how to encourage individuals towards donating blood in the wake of the policy change rather than inhibiting them...[and to] “explore whether potential donors are aware of factors that may influence non-compliance.”

An online experiment took place in which researchers conducted a “two (risk frame: risk vs. safety) by three (focus: donor vs. recipient vs. both) between-subjects online experiment (n = 2,677). The main outcomes were intentions to donate and feelings of being put-off/deterred from donating (both for self and others). [The paper] also assessed the extent that forgetting, embarrassment/shame, and question irrelevance were perceived to be associated with under-reporting sexual behavior.”

The paper found “that frames focusing on increasing safety (rather than reducing risk) and/or the recipient (rather than the donor) decrease participants' likelihood of being put-off donating following a policy change involving individualized risk assessment of donors' sexual behavior and infection history. These findings add to the growing body of evidence that other [frames], emphasizing the benefits to others, enhance health-based cooperation and that safety frames are effective when a policy change is viewed positively...exposure to recipient-focused and safety-based frames also reducing expectations that others would be deterred. We also observed that current donors, lapsed donors, and LGBTQ+ participants reported lower avoidance. Thus, the number of current active donors should not reduce under this policy. However, people from Asian, Black, and Mixed ethnic communities were more likely to be deterred...[Participants] were aware of the mechanisms linked to under-reporting of sexual behavior: (i) feeling embarrassed, (ii) forgetting or (iii) questions perceived as irrelevant. Embarrassment/shame was rated [as] the most likely mechanism leading to inaccurate reporting, followed by irrelevance, and getting. The use of smartphones as aide-memoires was highlighted as a potentially effective

(continued on page 2)



Communicating & Framing the Shift to Individual Risk-based Deferrals (continued from page 1)

strategy to enhance accurate recall.”

The authors concluded that blood centers should consider “framing communications to focus both on safety and recipients.” They also explained that additional research is needed to understand “why people from ethnic minority communities are more likely to indicate that they would be deterred from donating under such a policy...[A]dditionally, while shame/embarrassment was reported as the main reason for not reporting sexual behavior, it is important to acknowledge that in this context this likely reflects everyday emotional reactions rather than clinical presentations of shame/embarrassment. As such, practical steps to minimize embarrassment through for example increased privacy to complete the screening questions should be explored. [Finally,] the importance of smartphones as memory aids, to enhance compliance should be examined...For example, if people are asked to recall their sexual behavior without their phone and again with their phone (as a means to reconstruct events and dates), are they able to recall more information about the number and nature of sexual encounters after using their phone?”

Citation: Ferguson, E., Bowen, S., Lawrence, C., *et al.* [Communicating the move to individualized donor selection policy: Framing messages focused on recipients and safety](#). *Transfusion*. 2022. ♦



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ABC advocates for and advances policies that promote the role of independent blood centers in providing life-saving blood products and recognize the continuous need for a safe and robust blood supply. ABC exists to advocate for laws and regulations recognizing the essential role that independent blood centers play in the health care system; promote partnerships, policies and programs that increase awareness about the need for blood donation; and serve as a thought-leader in the advancement of evidence-based medical and scientific solutions related to health and safety.

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RESEARCH IN BRIEF

An International Survey of Research Partnerships Between Blood Services and Public Health Authorities. A [study](#) in *Vox Sanguinis* sought to determine “the scope of partnerships between blood services and public health (PH) authorities [since it] is not well documented.” For the study, authors conducted “an international survey among blood services to explore how they engage in partnerships.” “Of the 79 targeted blood services, 27 (34.2 percent) completed the survey... Respondents were well distributed across the world. [with a] clear majority of blood services [indicating that they] collaborate to some extent with PH authorities.” The study noted that “22 (81.5 percent) blood services indicated currently using blood donor data or samples for PH research or transfusion-transmissible pathogen surveillance, and two (7.4 percent) planned to do so in the future... Surveillance for transfusion-transmitted infectious diseases (TTID) in the general population was the most common research activity conducted by participating blood services... Six (22.2 percent) blood services have established longitudinal cohorts of blood donors, and eight (29.6 percent) were planning to do so... Furthermore, 10 (37.0 percent) blood services have established a biobank based on blood donors, and nine (33.3 percent) were planning to do so later.” The study reported that “23 (85.2 percent) respondents [are] sharing donor data with PH authorities at least occasionally. Among these respondents, 16 (69.6 percent) shared only aggregate data, and 20 (87.0 percent) shared aggregate data or de-identified, individual-level data... Twelve (44.4 percent) blood services reported (at least occasionally) sharing samples with PH authorities, nine (33.3 percent) of which de-identified samples before sharing them... Eighteen (66.6 percent) blood services indicated that their routine donor consent form at the time of donation included a statement on the use of donor data and samples for PH research... Six (22.2 percent) blood services [shared that they] have a data-sharing agreement with PH agencies.” The authors concluded that the “results of this survey indicate that blood services collaborate extensively with PH authorities on a wide variety of research goals... This [study] also highlight[ed] a broader limitation: in many jurisdictions, there are already established working relationships between blood services and PH authorities, yet these relationships are not widely known. This lack of knowledge and awareness represents missed opportunities for collaborative research.”

Citation: Lewin, A., Osiowy, C., Erikstrup, C., Custer, B., Renaud, C., Tiberghien, P., *et al.* [Research partnerships between blood services and public health authorities: An international, cross-sectional survey.](#) *Vox Sang.* 2022.

Contributed by Richard Gammon, MD, Medical Director at OneBlood 💧

Upcoming ABC and ADRP Webinars – Don’t Miss Out!

- **ABC Scientific, Medical, and Technical Journal Club Webinar** – December 7 from 3-4 PM EST. More information coming soon!

ABC Calendar of Events

ABC offers a variety of meetings, workshops and virtual opportunities for education and networking as well as participation in ABC business. The [calendar of events](#) includes annual and summer meetings, board meetings, workshops, and webinars, and details will be updated as confirmed. We look forward to your support and participation!



America's Blood Centers
It's About *Life*.

INSIDE ABC

The programs and services described in the Inside ABC section are available to ABC member blood centers and their staff only, unless otherwise specified.

Nominations Are Open for 26th Annual Awards of Excellence

America's Blood Centers (ABC) is accepting nominations for the 26th Annual *Awards of Excellence*. The program provides an opportunity for member blood centers to provide national recognition and showcase the best and brightest in the blood donation community. This year's ceremony will take place Tuesday, March 7th, 2023, at the Ritz-Carlton (Pentagon City in Arlington, Va.) in conjunction with ABC's 61st Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. We encourage member blood centers to take advantage of this opportunity to provide recognition by submitting nominations before Wednesday, November 30th. Nominations may be submitted via this [form](#). Additionally, two complimentary tickets will be given to award winners. Additional details including award categories and descriptions are available to ABC members in MCN 22-088. Please contact [Member Services](#) with any questions or to receive a copy of the MCN.

(Source: MCN 22-088, 10/19/22)

Register for the 61st ABC Annual Meeting

[Register](#) today for the [61st ABC Annual Meeting](#) and 26th Annual *Awards of Excellence*. These events will take place March 6th-8th, 2023 at the Ritz-Carlton (Pentagon City) in Arlington, Va. Please secure your hotel [reservation](#) by February 17th. The ABC Annual Meeting brings together blood center executives and national leaders to discuss advocacy and regulatory updates, the latest in science, medicine, and technical affairs, and hot topics facing the blood community. In addition, ABC is excited to share that the final day of this year's meeting will feature a full day Advocacy Workshop focused on building tangible advocacy skills that can immediately benefit your blood center. The preliminary program-at-a-glance is [available](#). Please contact [us](#) with questions.

(Source: MCN 22-097, 11/17/22)

October Blood Bulletin Published

America's Blood Center's (ABC) has published the October 2022 edition of the redesigned [Blood Bulletin](#). This issue is titled: "Cryoprecipitate (Cryo) and Alternatives" and [PDF](#) or [MS Word](#) versions are available. The article was written by Courtney Hopkins, DO, Senior Chief Medical Officer at Vitalant, Samantha Ngamsuntikul, MD, Associate Medical Director at South Texas Blood & Tissue Center, a subsidiary of BioBridge Global, Richard Gammon, MD, Medical Director at OneBlood, Ruchika Goel, MD, MPH, Medical Director at ImpactLife, Nancy Van Buren, MD, Medical Director at Innovative Blood Resources and Community Blood Center of Kansas City, divisions of New York Blood Center. Louis Katz, MD, Chief Medical Officer Emeritus at ImpactLife was also a contributor. [Blood Bulletin](#) is reviewed and edited by ABC's Scientific, Medical, and Technical (SMT) Publications Committee.

(Source: MCN 22-092, 10/25/22) ◆



BRIEFLY NOTED

According to data [reported](#) in the “National Hospital Flash Report: October 2022” from Kaufman Hall, “[h]ospitals faced decreasing revenues and treated sicker patients.” The report also explained that “[h]ospitals did, however, see slightly lower expenses, but the drop was not enough to offset revenue decrease.” Additional insights from the update include:

- “margins remain negative in September;
- revenue decreases drive negative margins; and
- margin performance may force hospitals into difficult decisions.”

The full report is available [here](#).

(Source: Kaufman Hall, [National Hospital Flash Report: October 2022](#), 11/3/22) 💧

WORD IN WASHINGTON

A report in *Becker's Payer Issues* [stated](#) that the Administration is expected to extend the COVID-19 public health emergency past January 11th, when it was set to expire. The PHE began in January 2020 and has been extended in 90-day increments as required by law. It allows several pandemic response measures and flexibility to continue. This includes multiple donor deferral changes made by the FDA early in the pandemic, such as reducing blood donor deferral for sexually active gay and bisexual men to three months, which are currently in effect until 60 days after the end of the PHE. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has committed to providing no less than 60-day notice prior to terminating the PHE declaration.

(Source: *Becker's Payer Issues*, [HHS to maintain COVID-19 public health emergency past January](#), 11/11/22)



Joni, L. Rutter, PhD has been [named](#) the director of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS). She has been serving as acting director since April 2021. In this role, Dr. Rutter “will oversee a diverse portfolio of research activities focused on improving the translational process of turning scientific discoveries into health interventions. The portfolio includes the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program, which is one of NIH’s largest supported programs and has played an important role in the agency’s COVID-19 response. In addition, she will direct innovative research programs to advance diagnoses and treatments, including gene therapies, for some of the more than 10,000 known rare diseases. She also will lead labs at NIH that drive team science with the private sector to create and test innova-

tive methods for improving the drug development process...Dr. Rutter joined NCATS in 2019 as deputy director.” According to an agency news release, her accomplishments include “[creating] strong networks across public and private sectors to inform existing and developing NCATS programs and significantly expand[ing] these efforts as acting director. She has championed approaches for leveraging real world data and artificial intelligence/machine learning to rapidly address public health questions. In the area of rare disease research, Dr. Rutter [has also] led an initiative that used data from health care systems to calculate approximate health care costs for the millions of people with rare diseases. This and related initiatives prompted recommendations, such as enhancing the collection of rare disease patient data, to reduce the economic and medical burdens facing this community. She also led the National COVID Cohort Collaborative from inception to implementation, and it is now one of the largest collections of secure and deidentified clinical data in the United States for COVID-19 research.”

(Source: NIH [News Release](#), 11/8/22) 💧



GLOBAL NEWS

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) has [announced](#) a move to an individual risk-based approach to blood donor deferral policies. According to the news release from the organization, “on November 28th, the IBTS will introduce a system of assessing each donor’s eligibility to donate on a person-by-person basis in relation to sexual history and risk, rather than applying risks associated with specific populations which have previously excluded some potential donors. This system is called Individual Donor Risk Assessment and is similar to the system that was introduced in the United Kingdom blood services in 2021... This is a fairer way to assess donor risk. Using a donor’s individual behavi[o]rs to determine if that person is eligible to donate makes the process fairer for all donors and more inclusive, while maintaining the safety of the blood supply. Every donor will be asked the same questions about their sexual activity, regardless of the donor’s gender or sexual orientation, or those of his/her partner... The IBTS will monitor changes in the rates of viral infections and syphilis in blood donors and any reported transfusion-transmitted infections in patients who have received blood. A compliance study will also be undertaken to determine if donors are complying with the new donor eligibility criteria.”

(Source: IBTS [News Release](#), 11/15/22)

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the government of Uganda are set to [test](#) three Ebola vaccine candidates in a clinical trial amid the ongoing outbreak, according to a report from STAT News. According to the report, “The three experimental vaccines that will be tested build off of existing vaccine experience. One is being produced by the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and uses the same vaccine platform as Merck’s Ebola Zaire vaccine, Ervebo; in fact, Merck made the doses that will be used in the clinical trial. It uses a livestock virus known as vesicular stomatitis virus that has been modified to carry a key protein from the Ebola Sudan virus. The two other vaccines — one is being developed by the Sabin Vaccine Institute, a nonprofit, while the other is being developed by the University of Oxford’s Jenner Institute — use adenoviruses that normally infect chimpanzees to introduce the immune system to a surface protein from Ebola Sudan viruses.”

(Source: *STAT News*, [WHO, Uganda plan to test three candidate Ebola vaccines in outbreak](#), 11/16/22) ♦

COMPANY NEWS

Beam Therapeutics [announced](#) that it has enrolled the first patient in a phase I/II clinical trial of the company’s investigational gene therapy to treat sickle cell disease in adult patients. According to a company news release, the investigational therapy is a “a patient-specific, autologous hematopoietic stem cell (HSC) therapy which incorporates base edits that are designed to mimic single nucleotide polymorphisms seen in individuals with hereditary persistence of fetal hemoglobin... Following enrollment in the BEACON trial, each patient will undergo a transfusion and mobilization process for HSC retrieval. The cells are then edited, creating an autologous BEAM-101 investigational drug product. Following the drug product manufacturing, patients in the trial will receive pre-treatment conditioning using a standard-of-care chemotherapy regimen, after which the edited cells are transplanted back into the patient. The trial is expected to include an initial “sentinel” cohort of three patients, treated one at a time to confirm successful engraftment, followed by dosing in up to a total of 45 patients.”

(Source: Beam Therapeutics, [News Release](#), 11/14/22) ♦



CALENDAR

Note to subscribers: Submissions for a free listing in this calendar (published weekly) are welcome. Send information to newsletter@americasblood.org. (For a more detailed announcement in the weekly "Meetings" section of the newsletter, please include program information.)

2022

Dec. 7. **ABC Scientific, Medical, and Technical Journal Club Webinar.** More information coming soon.

Dec. 8. **U.S. Food and Drug Administration Blood Products Advisory Committee Meeting (Virtual).** More details available [here](#).

2023

Mar. 6-8. **ABC Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.** [Registration](#) is open. Additional information is available [here](#).

April. 24-28. **ABC Blood Advocacy Week.** More information coming soon.

Sept. 21-22. **29th IPFA/ Paul-Ehrlich-Institut[e] (PEI) International Workshop on Surveillance and Screening of Blood-borne Pathogens, Bologna, Italy.** More information available [here](#).

May 9-11. **2023 ADRP Conference, Charlotte, N.C.** Call for abstracts, hotel information, and more are available [here](#).

Sept. 17-20. **American Association of Tissue Banks Annual Meeting, National Harbor, Md.** More information available [here](#).

Oct. 14-17. **AABB Annual Meeting, Nashville, Tenn.** More information available [here](#). 💧

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

For Sale. 2023 All American Blue Bird Bus: 6.7L Diesel Engine with 6 Speed Allison Transmission/Air Breaks/Air Suspension/Wheelbase: 232"/100 Gallon Fuel Tank. This bus is ready for you to convert into your blood mobile Price: \$155k. ****IMMEDIATE POSSESSION**** ****location: ROCKFORD, IL**** Please contact Gary at (815) 961-2307 or gperry@rrvbc.org.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Classified advertisements, including notices of positions available and wanted, are published free of charge for a maximum of three weeks per position per calendar year for ABC institutional members. There are charges for non-members: \$139 per placement for *ABC Newsletter* subscribers and \$279 for non-subscribers. A six (6) percent processing fee will be applied to all credit card payments. Notices ordinarily are limited to 150 words. To place an ad, e-mail: newsletter@americasblood.org

POSITIONS

Executive Director of Donor Experience. Sheppard Community Blood Center is currently seeking an Executive Director to provide leadership and direction over all aspects of donor experience. The ideal candidate is a proven leader, collaborative, and innovative. Responsible for implementing processes and procedures to reach optimal department efficiency by meeting successful product collection, financial, quality, compliance, and customer service goals. Provides direction, coaching, support, and leadership to Donor Services, Apheresis, and Community Resources Directors and departments. Educational requirement: Bachelor's degree in a medical and/or management field preferred. Master's degree highly preferred. Experience: Minimum of five years management experience, blood bank focus preferred. To

apply, please visit sheperdblood.org and click on the JOBS tab.

Laboratory Tech I or II -- 2nd shift (Rhode Island Blood Center). This position is responsible for the execution of testing and quality control (QC) procedures following Standard Operating Procedures, as assigned. Testing includes routine donor testing in large batches, as well as component qualifications. This position is responsible for proper disposition of components based on test or QC results. This position also works with the Supervisor of Client Testing to ensure appropriate test menus are completed as ordered and reported. Essential Functions:

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POSITIONS (continued from page 7)

High complexity testing of donor blood samples with proper technique and documentation according to the procedures of the Rhode Island Blood Center, including computer and physical quarantine. Carrying out all procedures in a reasonable time frame as determined by supervisory personnel. Labeling of blood components including proper checking and documentation according to the procedures of the Rhode Island Blood Center Laboratory. This position is a Second Shift position. Five 8-hour shifts or Four 10-hour shifts. Qualifications: MLT, BB, MT or equivalent, or SBB (ASCP) certification. Must meet requirements for Testing Personnel for a Highly Complex Laboratory as described in the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act of 1988. Data entry skills preferred. Click [here](#) to view the full job description and apply.

Medical & Laboratory Director – South Division. Vitalant is currently seeking a Medical & Laboratory Director to provide oversight for the patients, donors, staff, and healthcare professionals in our South Division (TN, LA, MS, NM, TX). Routine duties include blood center activities such as component manufacturing, product management, laboratory testing, donor suitability and counseling, education, & consultation and clinical services activities such as oversight of an immunohematology reference laboratory, transfusion services, therapeutic apheresis, and cellular therapy collections (e.g., Dendreon). Additional areas of specialization, such as cell sourcing and cellular therapy/cord blood, may be assigned as needed. This position works directly with the Corporate and Division teams to promote Vitalant's mission, vision, quality policy, and strategic initiatives to position Vitalant as a Center of Transfusion Medicine Excellence. Modeling high ethical, customer care, and confidentiality standards always, this person serves a vital role for assuring compliance with current policies, programs, and directives and providing medical support for the Blood Services Division and Vitalant Clinical Services. This role can work remotely anywhere within the South Division (TN, LA, MS, NM, TX) with 20 percent travel to visit internal and external partners but preference is given to candidates located in either LA or TN. How to apply: <https://bloodsystems.taleo.net/careersection/jobdetail.ftl?job=222681&lang=en>

Donor Services Operations Director (Oklahoma Blood Institute - Enid, Oklahoma). To provide leadership and direction over all aspects of mobile operation activities. To ensure that processes are in place to reach optimal department efficiency by meeting successful product collection, financial, quality, compliance, and customer service goals. All tasks undertaken, regardless of their timing, that have clear applicability to blood banking and transfusion medicine are considered within this position's scope of employment and are, therefore,

subject to the Institute's Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in management or medical field preferred, minimum of five years' leadership/management experience, blood bank-focus preferred and valid driver's license. Salary: Competitive salary based on education and/or experience and **\$500 bonus after 6 months and \$1,000 bonus after 1 year!** Benefits: Health, dental, vision, life insurance, long term disability, 401(k), paid-time off, \$5,000 annual tuition reimbursement, holiday pay, etc. How to apply: <http://obi.org/careers/>

Divisional Director. The Blood Connection is seeking a Divisional Director to provide oversight to our day-to-day operations in Charlotte, NC. This position provides direction for the division and ensures that directed departments meet divisional objectives. The Divisional Director will help provide support to executive management for the evaluation, planning, and execution of expansion into new territories. The ideal candidate will be a self-starter with a minimum of five years of progressive management experience. Candidates must possess excellent interpersonal, analytical, and strategic planning abilities. We offer an exceptional benefits package including a generous 401k match, 30 days PTO, company bonuses, tuition reimbursement, cell phone stipend, and yearly increases. Join one of the fastest growing blood centers in the country and help make an impact in your community today! How to apply: [Divisional Director Application](#)

Executive Director of Arkansas Blood Institute (Little Rock, Arkansas). The Arkansas Blood Institute is seeking a "community spirited" professional to LEAD its Little Rock team in fulfilling the mission to recruit blood donors, drive sponsors, and volunteers and to store and deliver blood units for local hospitals. This public-facing, "visible" position not only requires an outgoing, bright, and energetic personality to foster relationships, but also demands detailed attention to planning, communication, regulations, finances, and personnel. Significant successes in project management and organizational expansion and entrepreneurship are desirable. Connectivity with regional leaders and access to key social networks would also be positives. The successful candidate will present and maintain a credible, positive image of the Arkansas Blood Institute in the local community. He/She will act as a liaison between the Institute and the community, organizations, and residents. Applicants should be goal-driven self-starters who have strong interpersonal, organizational, and analytic skills. They should be able to motivate and inspire diverse constituencies including donors, sponsors, staff, and volunteers. Salary Range: Competitive salary, commission plan, and excellent benefits package including health, dental, vision, and

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POSITIONS (continued from page 8)

life insurance, 401(k), paid time off, tuition reimbursement, referral bonus, and retention bonus. How to apply: <http://arkbi.org/careers/>

Sr. Director, Biotherapies Quality. Vitalant is currently seeking a Sr. Director of Biotherapies Quality to provide support and leadership in advancing performance related to compliance, process improvement, and risk mitigation in the area of Biotherapies, including, but not limited to cellular therapy collections and processing, collection of starting materials for biotherapy treatments, apheresis therapeutic procedures and clinical laboratories such as HLA and Specialty Coag labs. This role will be located in our corporate headquarters in Scottsdale, AZ and lead a geographically dispersed team who comprise the quality staff overseeing these activities. This Sr. Director is a highly visible leader and an integral member of the Quality Leadership team who assures quality in their areas of oversight. How to apply: <https://bloodsystems.taleo.net/careersection/jobdetail.ftl?job=222962&lang=en>. ♦