

PROMOTION OF
VOLUNTARY BLOOD
DONATION IN
MAHARASHTRA STATE

ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Blood transfusion services have gained significant importance and momentum in view of HIV infection. The efficacy of transmission of HIV through blood and blood products is 100% and screening of the blood for HIV can eliminate this mode of transmission to a large extent.

There are also other diseases which can be transmitted through blood which can be addressed as Transfusion Transmitted Diseases (T.T.D) They are Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Malaria, Syphilis.

The ultimate aim of blood banks and transfusion services is to provide safe blood.

Blood can be made safe by the following ways:

- ◆ Collection of blood from healthy persons absolutely on voluntary donation,
- ◆ Adoption of good manufacturing practices: Screening of blood for T. D. D. using highly sensitive and specific tests,
- ◆ Practicing rational use of blood: This needs better emphasis, so that unnecessary transfusion is avoided. A single unit transfusion needs to be stopped, and to encourage use of blood components, Autologous transfusion in cold planned cases.

Blood Banks need to concentrate basically on collection blood from healthy individuals. This can be done by meticulous selection of donors and by encouraging voluntary donation.

In a historical judgment Supreme Court of India, banned buying and selling of blood with effect from 1st January 98. Hence it is imperative to make available safe blood. As a result voluntary donation of blood should be promoted in the community.

The efforts are in progress to improve the percentage of voluntary blood donation in the State. By the end of December 1998, blood collection by voluntary donation has improved to 46% from 38% in 1997. To achieve 100% voluntary donation by 2000 A.D. it is necessary to prepare an action plan and make concerted efforts by the health administrators as well as by the community. There is a need for long programming so that voluntary blood donation becomes public movement and life style of the younger generation.

Thus there is a need for launching an Intensive voluntary blood donation campaign in the state.

ACTION PLAN:

The action plan comprises of mass as well as person to person communication to improve the knowledge, attitude and behavioural practices regarding blood donation. The proposed different activities under the action plan are as follows:

1. MASS MEDIA CAMPAIGN

To make voluntary blood donation programme as people's movement, it is essential to give wide publicity of this activity through all available mass media channels such as Newspapers, T.V., Citycable channels, Radio etc. so that the Importance of blood donations, requirement of blood, collection from voluntary donors and transfusion transmitted diseases and the use of safe blood is understood by the people. The messages related to this, should be highlighted in the local languages on Radio, T.V. and through Print media. The celebrities from film, sports, political field and renowned social workers need to be involved to trigger the messages to the community through T.V. spots. These messages be released throughout the year.

i. SLOGANS ON BLOOD DONATION

This is one of the methods of mass communication. The slogans like “रक्तदान जीवनदान” may be displayed or painted on the prominent places in bold red letter with yellow background (size 1 x 2 meters) The paintings should attract the readers, specially youths.

ii. DISPLAY OF CINE SLIDES

Still today, a large part of population go to the theaters, especially the younger generation. It is observed that during intermission 50% of the people are present in the hall. The display of cine slides, with triggering messages on blood donation will definitely motivate people for voluntary donation. This can be a routine activity round the year. Special request can be made to the managers for exhibiting the slides before starting the movie for which a letter can be sent from District Collector to the President of the Theaters' Association.

2. ORGANISING MARATHON RACE, BICYCLE RACE, RALLY

For the Involvement of prospective donors it is necessary to sensitise High Schools & Jr. College students with the help of High School and College students rallies, marathon and bicycle races can be organised on special days. The cooperation of the sports officers can be sought. Before starting the rallies a lecture on blood donation and its importance can be told to the students. Blood grouping of the students also can be done. The list of participants alongwith their blood group can be retained and used as prospective donors.

3. ESSAY & QUIZ COMPETITIONS

School and college students form a core group for this activity and need to be actively involved in this activity. Essay and quiz on blood donation can be organised. Through this activity we will be able to know their knowledge about blood donation. This will help in finding out thrust areas which can help in preparing the IEC material exclusively for students who are the prospective donors. Blood grouping of the participants can also be done and the list of participants along with their blood group can be preserved by the institutions.

4. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN'S GROUP

The available data shows that only 3.5% are female donors in the state. Whereas female donor's percentage is 8% in A'bad, 20% in Chandigarh & 40% in Thailand.

95% of the blood collected in the voluntary donation camps is usually from youths, whereas 50-56% of the blood is being utilized for female patients (A'bad division study). This information will definitely make women to think and act. They may come forward to participate in blood donation drive.

- College and University students and working female groups in industries can participate in voluntary blood donation. Women can organise special voluntary blood donation camps for females on the eve of International Women's Day, World Breast Feeding Week, Safe Motherhood Day, Blood Donation Week, World AIDS Day, World Health Day & World Population Day. Thus women can prove their existence and might.

• ***BLOOD DONATION ON AGENDA OF LADIES CLUBS***

Lady Giants, Leo, Rotary Clubs and Women's organisations/groups in Industrial Houses have their regular meetings. During these meetings doctors can sensitise ladies on blood donation and can apprise them what role they can play in this noble cause. The lady members can work not only as volunteers during blood camps but also can be good motivators and camp organisers. Once ladies take initiative, the entire community is galvanized for the cause. Blood Bank Society of Chandigarh has 68% female members.

• ***RANGOLI COMPETITIONS FOR WOMEN***

"RANGOLI" competitions on blood donation theme can be organised in Ladies colleges, Manila Mandals and Ladies clubs. If a single female student or worker becomes a donor, her entire family can be motivated, as females are the best motivators in the family. Coordination between health institutions and NGOs specially women groups is important. This will help in preparing an exclusive female donors as well as motivators directory. Such an experiment is done in Aurangabad. The response is tremendous.

5. INVOLVEMENT OF HOME GUARDS, SRP & POLICE

Every year there is a regular recruitment in Homeguards, S. R. P. and Police organisations. One can organise, blood grouping, lectures on use of blood and blood donation camps. In Calcutta there is a separate donor forum and council in these departments who meet every week for this activity.

6. BLOOD DONATION CAMPS ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Blood donation camps can be organised on occasion of the Birthdays or Death anniversaries of the National leaders, Important political leaders or even special auspicious occasions.

An Action plan can be prepared for the whole year in advance. The resource persons coordinators and associates to be identified and contact them in advance. Important religious and social organisational groups to be identified like Nirankaris Mandal, Ganesh Utsav Mandal, Dasera Utsav Mandal(नवरात्र उत्सव मंडळ)

Involvement of political and social leaders may lead to create a political will and commitment to the cause. Special Blood donation camps can be organised on Gandhi Jayanti Day, Independence Day, Republic Day, Dr. Ambedkar's Jayanti Day, Mohammed Prophet's Birthday, Christmas, Buddha Jayanti, so that people from all walks of life come together for the cause without any bias.

7. INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTHS

Youth forms an important core group. 95% of the blood collected in camps are through college students and hardly 5% of blood collected is used for them. Every college has NSS and NCC units. Regular activities related to voluntary blood donation can be organized through them. They can work as volunteers, organisers and blood donors. Thus they can be real civil soldiers of the Nation.

8. PICTURE & POSTER COMPETITION

Cartoons, Paintings and Drawings are the good media of expression. A single poster can give lot of message to the community. The places where there are schools of Art (Aurangabad, Nagpur, Amravati, Mumbai, Pune) this activity can be undertaken. The posters can be used for making IEC material of good quality, and can be used for display in exhibitions. To generate good quality drawing, picture on voluntary blood donation theme, competitions can be organised for students and for public. A wide publicity need to be given for such competitions. The prize winning entries should be published in the leading News papers and be used for generating IEC material.

9. STREET PLAYS ON BLOOD DONATION

Street plays on different themes are popular in urban situations. Streetplays attract the commoners specially pedestrians. A group of artists can be identified and briefed about blood donation. Through them street plays can be organised in public places. This activity can also be taken to the rural areas for sensitising the rural masses.

Donors from rural areas contribute to 25% of the collection. But it is observed that large No. of cases from rural areas either referred or come on their own to the urban areas for operations. At that time they required blood. This fact can be highlighted to the rural community and they can be sensitised and motivated to participate in voluntary blood donation drives.

10. DISTRIBUTION OF HANDOUTS

Handouts covering social & technical details on blood donation, (AIDS, STDs) can be printed and distributed at the time blood donation or blood grouping camps or at the time of other motivational activities. The information in the handouts should be precise and group specific. The distribution of handbills should be done meticulously. It is observed that 40% of the receivers read the message when it is precise and informative.

11. CONFERENCE OF CAMP ORGANISERS / MOTIVATORS

This activity may be conducted every year. In this conference of organisers from different associations can be brought on a common platform, so that they exchange their views, success stories and develop a healthy rapport. All blood banks be requested to present their annual report. The details of camps organised, blood collected, utilised and the requirement for the next year are discussed. The efforts need to be made to highlight and to apprise every organisation to come together in case of emergencies and to provide quality blood for transfusion.

The organisers need to be felicitated for their humanitarian services rendered to the community with Memento and certificates. So also voluntary blood donors who have donated blood for 25, 50, 100 times to be honored and felicitated with momentos.

This activity helps in developing and retaining cordial relation amongst various organisations, blood banks in the districts. This will enable the authorities to assess requirement the blood in the area and to organise voluntary blood donation camps. The recognition of blood donors enhances the promotion of donor recruitment activity.

12. VIDEO FILM ON BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICES

A video film depicting different activities on blood banking and transfusion services is an essential teaching aid. This can be used while promoting donors for blood donation and while apprising the administrators and community leaders for additional budgetary allocation for modernising blood banks or to improve the quality of transfusion services.

13. DOCUMENTATION OF CAMPS

No programme is complete, without proper documentation. Therefore it is necessary to record each and every activity and to take photographs of each important activity. Properly documented report should be published in the News papers, Magazines and Bulletins which will disseminate correct information to the community. Inturns community response is ensured for future camps.