Compliance

Quality Assurance

QA department ensures that all blood and blood components processed by SANBS comply with the required standards. This is achieved through a system by which products are tested while they are being manufactured, and also at the end of processing. Quality assurance ensures that all blood components and activities carried out by the SANBS meet required specifications.

Reducing unnecessary transfusions

The primary responsibility for ensuring appropriate clinical use of blood lies with clinicians. SANBS plays a key role in promoting effective transfusion practice by contributing to the development of a national policy and guidelines on clinical use of blood.

Safe blood starts with me

SANBS staff members are responsible for recruiting and retaining regular, safe blood donors, who are essentially the lifeblood of our organisation. Strict procedures are in place to ensure that donors act responsibly when pledging their support by donating blood and that they are not donating blood to get a free HIV/AIDS test.

Blood donated by a volunteer donor is treated with utmost respect, as each unit of safe donated blood is invaluable to patients in dire need of this precious gift.

Low-risk blood donors

The safer the source of donated blood, the safer the final product is likely to be. Voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors from low-risk populations who give blood regularly are the foundation of a safe and adequate blood supply.

A system of voluntary, regular, non-remunerated donation also enables more cost-effective use to be made of limited resources by reducing the volume of donated blood that has to be destroyed because of evidence of infectious disease markers.

Many countries have introduced legislation that allows blood donation only by voluntary non-remunerated donors. This can be achieved through the establishment of an effective programme of blood donor recruitment and retention, trained personnel equipped with an efficient donor information, education and motivation programme.

It also sets down strict criteria for donor selection and screening to identify donors for deferral or exclusion, together with efficient blood donor record systems. The identification of donor populations at low risk for transfusion-transmissible infections, and the monitoring of transfusion-transmissible infections in both the general population and the donor population are also key elements of the strategy for blood safety.

SANBS encourages South Africans to commit themselves to maintaining a safe blood supply for the country. Blood is essential in the treatment of many serious illnesses and it is of utmost importance that there is sufficient safe blood available for South African patients. Blood and blood products are used for open-heart surgery, burn victims, newborn babies and in the treatment of diseases such as leukaemia and cancer, among others.

Did you know

- Your body replaces liquid donated within 24 hours through fluid intake.
- Every time your heart beats, 20% of your heart's output goes directly to your brain, carrying oxygen vital for survival. Between 40 and 45% of your blood is made up of red blood cells that carry this oxygen. The remaining 55 to 60% is plasma, a small proportion of white blood cells (which defend your body), clotting factors and platelets.
- If every capillary, vein and artery in your body were placed end to end, they would cover a distance of 150 000 kilometres.
- The average volume of blood in an adult body is 4 to 5 litres, or about 8% of the body weight.

Never donate blood to have a "free HIV test

Some people still live under the misconception that they can get a free HIV test if they donate blood at one of the blood donation clinics. This misconception poses a risk to patients and is a constant challenge to SANBS. The company is committed to providing

sufficient, safe blood to patients who need blood transfusion as part of their medical treatment.