

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the document entitled "Development of national blood transfusion services in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region"¹⁰ submitted by the Regional Director,

Noting the status of blood transfusion services and their capacity to provide safe blood and blood products in Member States of the Region,

Expressing concern about the problems and difficulties impeding the development of the blood transfusion services in Member States, particularly those relating to: the non-integration of blood transfusion services into national health plans; insufficient support in the form of financial and human resources; fragmentation and competition in providing blood transfusion services; poor planning and funding of blood-donor recruitment; lack of trained manpower; a poor grasp of quality assurance; insufficient quality control aimed at minimizing the transmission of diseases like hepatitis and AIDS; and deficiencies in support services,

1. ENDORSES the proposed solutions and main general recommendations made in the document;

2. ENCOURAGES all Member States of the Region to utilize the findings and recommendations and the approaches proposed for the improvement and further development of national blood transfusion services, requesting Ministries of Health to seek the realization of the following:

2.1. Establishment with an adequate budget of a national blood transfusion service, or provincial blood transfusion services where more appropriate;

2.2. An appropriate level of national self-sufficiency for the provision of blood and blood products;

2.3. Establishment by the blood transfusion service of an entirely voluntary blood donation programme through effective long-term planning;

2.4. A multisectoral approach to implementation by involving the health services and other related sectors, including training institutions, at all levels from policy making to community;

2.5. Close cooperation between the transfusion services of the armed forces and the national blood transfusion service, or their integration;

2.6. Appropriate legislation to ensure the safety of donors, staff and recipients of blood. Authority should be delegated to the national blood transfusion service to implement regulations governing standards in blood banks, in hospitals and elsewhere;

2.7. Establishment of the speciality of "blood transfusion medicine" for doctors and scientists wishing to make a career in blood transfusion;

2.8. Incorporation of the teaching of blood transfusion technology into the curricula of schools of medical laboratory science;

2.9. Inclusion of training in the rational use of blood and blood products in the curricula of medical faculties and nursing schools and the provision of refresher courses for practising clinicians;

10. Document EM/RC34/12.

2.10. An attractive career structure for staff within the national blood transfusion service, including possibilities for further education and research;

2.11. Use of the mass media for informing the public about the blood transfusion service and its importance, encouraging people to donate blood;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

3.1. to provide the necessary technical support to Member States for implementing these recommendations, including promoting cooperation between Member States in this regard;

3.2. to follow up implementation of these recommendations and continue to review the progress made in the development of blood transfusion services in Member States of the Region from time to time, reporting to a future Session of the Regional Committee.