

Draft of the National Plan for promoting voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2008 – 2011.

1. The present situation

In the years 2001 – 2007, the blood transfusion assistance in the Republic of Moldova was organized in accordance with the National Development Plan of the Blood Service for the years 2002 – 2006, approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 1050 of 4 October 2001, and the National Plan for Transfusion Safety and Blood Products Supply for the years 2007 – 2011, approved by the Government, Decision No.637 of 7 June 2007, and its activity involved health system services, central and local public authorities, public and non-governmental organization, as well as the community.

According to the objectives set, the following results have been accomplished:

- the Blood service organizational and economic optimization;
- activities aimed at implementing blood products quality and safety at all technological stages;
- providing therapeutic institutions with the necessary list of blood components and products in proportion to their real needs.

However, the blood donation in the republic has been promoted and organized not as efficient as expected. In 2007, the structure of blood donors was represented mostly by replacement (non-remunerated) donors – 82.5 per cent, the voluntary donors being about 16.4 per cent and regular donors – 10 per cent.

The number of blood donations has increased with 80 per cent if compared to that in 2001 (41076), and at 1000 population it increased from 11 in 2001 to 21 in 2007, and constituted 74000.

Evidence from throughout the world shows that regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors are the safest possible blood donors, as they are more likely to be free from transfusion-transmissible infections. As a rule, regular donors have their blood tested before each donation, proving to be perfectly healthy and being allowed to donate blood. The countries, whose systems are based on remunerated donations, have to face higher-risk populations and rebut large quantities of blood at the testing level, after identifying the presence of various infections. Even if replacement donors represent a lower risk population if compared to remunerated donors, the prevalence of transfusion-transmissible diseases is still higher than in the case of regular voluntary donors. The emotional pressure felt by replacement donors would be one of the

motives why these are more prone to hide deferrable characteristics to ensure their donation. Moreover, the system based on replacement donors constitutes sometimes a system of hidden remunerations, as the patients' family members can afford to pay people to donate the necessary blood units.

The research "Blood Donation in Moldova: knowledge, attitudes and practices in the general population" offers more details on the situation regarding the evolution of blood donation in Moldova. A large number of the population of the republic have donated blood at least once, of these only 12 per cent come from the age category between 18 and 30, and 60 per cent are represented by those between 50 and 60 years old. Younger blood donors usually donate for a relative or an acquaintance, and the most preferable donations are for relatives and acquaintances. Even if 86 per cent of the population have a positive attitude towards blood donation, the problem is that only 34 per cent intend to donate in the future. The motive why most people don't give blood is that they haven't been asked to donate. Still, the excuse of those who have been asked is that they are afraid to get an infection. This fear is conditioned mostly by their poor knowledge: about half of the respondents believe that something may happen to the donor when attending to donate, yet the most frequent wrong idea is that the donor may take an infection. Also, more than 70 per cent of the respondents do not know that a blood donor can donate blood every 2 months.

Judging by these results, it is necessary to focus on informing the population on the safety of the blood donation process and blood donation frequency and provide medical evidence. Moreover, efforts aimed at changing the people's attitude towards regular voluntary blood donation are necessary, as well as at promoting it initially among young people starting with schools.

Healthy replacement donors must be encouraged to convert to non-remunerated donors. By reminding them of the moment when they donated blood and helped a person they care about is a good way to make them admit that voluntary blood donation can help some other person's relative, whose family members can not donate blood.

Ensuring the republic with a sufficient number of healthy and voluntary blood donors is a priority for the next years. But this goal can be accomplished only in cooperation with other state and public organizations. An efficient blood donor program includes participation at the community and national levels, and the community leaders' involvement and support is vital in attracting voluntary donors. We try to educate solidarity among blood donors, as well as to remind the state that voluntary blood donors are a crucial source for the country's health resources.

2. Legal reference, International recommendations and European directives

The National Program “Transfusion Safety and Blood Products Supply for the years 2007 – 2011”, approved by the Government, Decision No.637 of 7 June 2007, as well as the Republic of Moldova – European Union Actions Plan served as a legal basis in developing the Project of the National Plan for promoting voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation (later referred to as the Plan).

The National Plan indicates the promotion of blood donations as being one of its main objectives. The Republic of Moldova – European Union Actions Plan requires adjusting blood service legal documents and standards to the requirements of the following recommendations and directives:

- Recommendation No.R(88)4 of the Committee of Ministers of all member states as regards health authorities’ responsibilities in blood transfusion area (for the voluntary non-remunerated donation) (*Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the 12th of December 1995, at the 545th meeting of vice-ministers*).
- Recommendation No.R(95)15 of the Committee of Ministers of all member states as regards the processing, utilization and quality of blood components (*Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the 19th of October 1995, at the 545th meeting of vice-ministers*).
- Directive 2002/98/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 January 2003, setting quality and safety standards for the collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human blood and blood components.
- Recommendation No.R(2003)11 of the Committee of Ministers of all member states as regards the use of pathogenic neutralization procedures for blood components (*Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the 19th of June 2003, at the 844th meeting of vice-ministers*).

One of the first actions carried out for achieving the above mentioned objective of the National Plan “Transfusion Safety and Blood Products Supply for the years 2007 – 2011”, was to create a Law regulating the haemovigilance, in accordance with current International requirements. The draft was developed to regulate the relations regarding the development of the voluntary non-remunerated donation of blood and blood

components, as well as their utilization by the medico-sanitarian institutions of the Republic of Moldova, granting medical and social rights for blood and blood components donors and recipients.

3. Goal

To ensure transfusion safety in the Republic of Moldova through taking blood from voluntary non-remunerated donors and changing the attitude of the community towards blood donation.

4. Objectives

1. To increase the proportion of voluntary blood donations in the Republic of Moldova up to 70 per cent from the total number of donations registered.
2. To increase the proportion of regular blood donors (donors who give blood twice a year or more often) up to 25 per cent of the total number of donations registered.
3. To increase the proportion of blood donors with the age between 18-30 years up to 25 per cent of the total number of donations registered.

5. Implementation strategies

All public services, non-governmental, private, public organizations will take part in implementing activities aimed at promoting blood donations and voluntary non-remunerated donor recruitment.

A) The Local Public Administration Minister and the local public authority

The local public authority will carry out measures aimed at promoting and organizing blood drives, as well as encouraging voluntary non-remunerated blood donation by offering different facilities and certificates (develop a civil recognition system for regular and experienced donors, as for example: offer bonuses, organize raffles and different cultural events).

B) Educational institutions

The Ministry of Education, together with the Ministry of Health will develop a curriculum on blood donation for secondary educational institutions in order to familiarize and educate the future generation on the concept of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.

They will also promote and organize blood drives in higher educational institutions motivating the young students to become regular donors during the years of study.

C) The Ministry of Defense

Will carry out activities intended to promote, organize and systematize blood donation among the recruits during their military service.

D) The Ministry of Culture and Tourism

Will organize different cultural events intended to promote regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.

E) Non-governmental organizations

The non-governmental organizations will help develop and organize informational and educational campaigns for the community, focusing on the importance of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, the participation of blood product recipients and the general public in promoting the voluntary donation, preparing and organizing public events and involving public persons, politicians, as well as organizing press conferences.

F) Private Organizations

The public services will develop strategic partnerships with private companies (including the local ones) for planning and organizing successful mobile drives in the company's office or building, as well as for attracting financial support for the free advertising space necessary for promotional campaigns on TV, the radio, social public billboards, unlimited free time offered by local and mobile telephone companies, etc.

G) The Ministry of Health

Will offer consultative support for organizing blood drives in the above mentioned institutions. Blood services and medical-sanitarian institutions will carry out activities aimed at changing the replacement donors' attitude towards voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and promoting regular blood donations among donors. In addition, they will participate at elaborating educational and promotional materials

regarding blood donation. They will also provide the Blood Service all necessary support in keeping and updating the official web page (the web site of the National Blood Transfusion Center) in order to ensure the population the access to all kind of information on blood donation.

The Actions Plan regarding the implementation of the National Plan for promoting voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2008 – 2011.

No.	Actions Implemented	Responsible for the implementation	Period of implementation	Sources	Identifying financial sources	Indicators of	
						Performance	achievement
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I. Organizing informational and educational campaigns for the community regarding voluntary non-remunerated blood donation							
1.1	Informing the community on the regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donation	Local public authorities, Ministry of Local Public Administration, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Non-Governmental Organizations, Private Organizations.	2008-2011	administrative human financial	Non-governmental organizations, Private organizations	Number of collective meetings, shows on TV, on the radio, publications, SMS, phone calls, etc.	The people's awareness and knowledge on voluntary non-remunerated blood donations.
1.2	Elaborating and editing informational and promotional materials on blood donation	Ministry of Health, Local public authorities, Ministry of Local Public Administration, Non-Governmental Organizations, Private Organizations.	2008-2011	administrative human financial	Non-governmental organizations, Private organizations	Number of leaflets, posters, pamphlets.	The people's awareness and knowledge on voluntary non-remunerated blood donations.
1.3	Elaborating the civil recognition system	Local public authorities,	2008	administrative human	-	Regulations of facilities for	The motivation of

	(facilities) for regular and experienced donors.	Ministry of Local Public Administration, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Sports Agency, Non-Governmental Organizations.				regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors.	the regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors.
1.4	Elaborating the curriculum on blood donation for the secondary educational institutions.	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education.	2008	administrative human	-	Curriculum on blood donation for secondary educational institutions.	-
1.5	Educating the future generation on the concept of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.	Ministry of Education.	2009-2011	administrative human	-	-	
1.6	Changing replacement donors' attitude towards voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.	Ministry of Health.	2008-2011	administrative human	-	Number of replacement donors converted to voluntary non-remunerated	The donors' awareness and knowledge on voluntary non-remunerated blood

						doors.	donations.
1.7	Promoting regular donations among donors	Ministry of Health.	2008-2011	administrative human	-	Total number of replacement, voluntary, regular blood donors registered.	The replacement and voluntary non-remunerated donors' awareness and knowledge on regular blood donations.
1.8	Promoting regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donation among students and recruits.	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defense.	2008-2011	administrative human	-	Number of regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors registered among students and recruits.	The students and recruits' awareness and knowledge on voluntary non-remunerated blood donations.
1.9	Organizing cultural and sportive events aimed at promoting regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Sports Agency, Non-Governmental Organizations, Private Organizations.	2008-2011	administrative human financial	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Sports Agency, Non-governmental organizations, Private	Number of regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors who participated at different	The motivation of the regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors.

					organizations.	cultural and sportive events.	
II. Organizing the voluntary non-remunerated blood donation							
2.1	Elaborating and publishing a Guide containing information on the Days in which representatives of the local public authority will attend to donate blood.	Ministry of Health	2008	administrative human financial	Non-governmental organizations, Private organizations.	The guide with the Days in which representatives of the local public authority will attend to donate blood.	-
2.2	Organizing donation days for students, recruits and local public administration territories.	Ministry of Health, Local public authorities, Ministry of Local Public Administration, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defense, Private Organizations.	2008-2011	administrative human	-	The program of voluntary blood drives organized in administrative territories, educational institutions, among recruits, etc.	Number of voluntary blood donations achieved with the help of the local public authority, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defense, private organizations