

A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE SANGUINE RESEARCH GROUP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE, COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA ENUGU CAMPUS, FOLLOWING A COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE AND PLENARY SESSION TO MARK THE WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY 2018

The World Blood Donor Day 2018 was commemorated on June 14, 2018 by the Sanguine Research Group of the Department of Medical Laboratory Science, College of Medicine, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. The theme of this year's event, "Blood Unites Us All", captures the very critical place of blood in the sustenance of life and wellbeing. To bring this message to the public, Sanguine Research group were guests at the Media Link of Radio Nigeria, 92.9 FM Enugu on Sunday, June 10, 2018 where they dissected the subject matter of blood donation and fielded questions from listeners who called in to the programme.

A public lecture entitled "Ethics and Legal Issues of Blood Donation" was subsequently delivered at the Faculty of Health Science and Technology by Dr. S.O. Ureme, to mark this year's event. The take-home messages from the highly educative lecture are summarized below. It is hoped that government and stakeholders will find them most useful for purposes of policy-making and development.

1. There is an urgent need to revive and sufficiently fund the National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) for free and accessible blood for the public. A private and public partnership towards funding is highly advocated to ensure sustainability and quality in blood transfusion service delivery.
2. Healthcare providers should ensure that each patient receives the particular component of the blood which they require according to their medical conditions. The common practice of transfusing whole blood to every patient that needs transfusion should be vehemently discouraged. Government is therefore urged to provide the necessary facilities for separation of blood into their components to entrench this current global standard of blood transfusion service.
3. As a corollary to the foregoing, there is, therefore, need for strict adherence to the WHO standards for donor selection, screening, storage, distribution and transfusion of blood/or its components. This will help eradicate quackery and malpractices which have militated against quality services in the blood transfusion medicine practice in Nigeria.
4. There should be active blood donation practice in the country, to generate sufficient data for purposes of research and development vis-à-vis forensic medicine as it relates to parentage testing and other medicolegal issues.

5. In line with global practice, a “flying squad” (at least four pints of O Rhesus negative blood group in each centre) and a blood donor diary should be put in place for easy accessibility for donors of rare blood group types for medical emergency management. This will be driven by active, collaborative research in the Colleges of Medicine.

6. Teaching hospitals and blood donation centres should develop a clearly defined, standardized and effective blood transfusion chain and modalities vis-à-vis donor recruitment/mobilization.

7. A healthy collaboration among the different relevant health professionals should be encouraged in blood transfusion practice. This will ensure that the highest quality of services is delivered.

Signed:

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