

LETTER TO EDITOR

Alarming Scarcity of Blood Donations

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To,
Editor,

Human blood is a unique and specialized tissue. Screening of blood donation products have been increasing in the community before usage. However, on the con side “Blood Donation Practices” are decreasing in the society. WHO blood donations recommendation for low-income countries are 20/1000 population, at minimum level. Currently, this rate is high in high-income countries (38/1000 population) and low in low-income countries (4/1000 population). According to WHO recent report, out of about 100 million blood donations, nearly more than half donations are duly needed by children under the age of five years, among low-income populations. On the contrary, among the high-income populations, this ratio (approximate 75%) is shifted to older than 65 years of age.¹ There is clear trend of boost in the demand of blood donations as the number of surgeries, neurological and blood carcinomas related palliative treatments as well as old age population are growing day by day. To cope up these, there is very scarce supply of blood donations in the healthcare market.² Even unethical blood donations like paid donors not able to cut these high demands down. Drastically they are increasing the burden of infections risks of transfusion related serious transmitted infections for instance HIV, Syphilis.^{3, 4} There should not be remuneration nor unwillingness regarding blood donations in any respect. It is an urgent need of reform and formulation of the strategic planning regarding hundred percent regular volunteer and unpaid “Blood Donation Practices”. It should be highlighted and included in the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) as well. Safe blood supply and storage is another burning issue in Pakistan. At present, there is no comprehensive

data available regarding “Blood Donation Practices” in Pakistan. It is estimated that Pakistan has been facing a constant stress and challenge to collect enough blood to meet the needs. Nobody actually wants to own the child. No doubt it is the prime responsibility of the political leaders and government to make accessible the provision of evidence based high quality and least costly blood and its products. However, it is neither justified nor acceptable to blame the government solely. Each one of us and everybody is a stakeholder including the donors, doctors, nurses, blood bank staff and paramedical staff about the safety and availability of blood and blood products.⁵ Moreover common mind set of the common man should be reshaped in this regard. Community participation should be enhanced and communication gap should be eliminated from the society as well.

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