



## Quality Management Project for Blood Transfusion Services in South-East Asia Region - 2001

**B**lood is the most precious and unique gift that a human being can give to a fellow person. This life saving fluid cannot be created artificially. Safety, adequacy and quality of blood are the essential features of any blood transfusion service (BTS). Developing countries require strengthening of their BTS to achieve this triad of basic essentials. WHO has identified safe blood as one of its priority areas and also initiated a Quality Management Project in 2000 to improve quality of BTS in all its Member Countries.

### Status in South-East Asia Region

Around 2500 blood banks are operational in ten countries of South-East Asia Region of WHO. These blood banks collect around 7 million units of blood every year against an estimated demand of 15 million units. In spite of universal knowledge that voluntary non-remunerative blood donation is the cornerstone of assuring safety of blood, only 61% of the blood collected in these countries is provided by voluntary non-remunerated donors. Optimal use of whatever blood is available includes use of specifically required components instead of whole blood and resorting to transfusion only when necessary. Data from SEAR countries show that nearly 78% of the blood collected is used as whole

blood, while only 22% is being converted into components. This reduces optimal utilization of a single unit of blood which could otherwise be divided into a number of components. With 110 million people infected with HIV (5 million), hepatitis B virus (80 million) and hepatitis C virus (25 million) in SEAR countries, effective screening of blood against these blood-borne infections can support the control activities against these agents. However, universal quality screening for all three agents is yet to be firmly established. The Quality Management Project (QMP) was initiated to overcome these problems by improving quality in all aspects of BTS and assuring safety, adequacy and quality of blood.



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