

NBBTS

Overview of National Bureau for Blood Transfusion Service (NBBTS)

In Nepal, with the increase demand of blood & blood products, Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) was initiated in 1964 (B.S. 2021). National Blood Transfusion Policy was developed in 1993 (B.S. 2050) to organize the ongoing activities of BTS, then the policy was revised in 2006 with the formation of National Steering Committee (NSC) & National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) and recently revised in 2014.

Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) in Nepal initiated its activities in a nationally coordinated way as National Blood Program under guiding principle of National Blood Transfusion Policy. National Bureau for Blood Transfusion Service (NBBTS) based at National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) is established as a focal point for blood safety on behalf of Ministry of Health (MoH) to regulate Blood Transfusion Service in the country, to advocate on Policy, Guidelines, and Protocols & SOPs.

Government commitments:-

1. Development National guidelines/protocols & standards.
2. Establishment of new BTSCs, now the available BTSCs is 105 in 72 districts.
3. Strengthening BTSC with the provision of component preparation set to one of BTSC in a year.
4. Refining the quality of BTSC with the provision of equipment's along with the related training.
5. Initiated and continuation of National External Quality Assurance Scheme (NEQAS) in Transfusion Transmitted Infections (TTIs) serology for BTSCs.
6. Organization of various blood transfusion/safety related training, motivational program, blood donation program.
7. Initiation of licensing of BTSCs.

National Blood Policy

Mission statement

The policy aims to ensure easily accessible and adequate supply of safe and quality blood and blood components collected / procured from a voluntary non-remunerated regular blood donor in well-equipped premises, which is free from transfusion transmitted infections, and is stored and transported under optimum conditions. Transfusion under supervision of trained personnel for all who need it irrespective of their economic or social status through comprehensive, efficient and a total quality management approach will be ensured under the policy.

Objectives of the policy

To achieve the above aim, the following objectives are drawn:

- To reiterate firmly the Govt. commitment to provide safe and adequate quantity of blood, blood components and blood products.
- To make available adequate resources to develop and reorganise the blood transfusion services in the entire country.
- To make latest technology available for operating the blood transfusion services and ensure it's functioning in an updated manner.
- To launch extensive awareness programmes for donor information, education, motivation, recruitment and retention in order to ensure adequate availability of safe blood.
- To encourage appropriate clinical use of blood and blood products.
- To strengthen the manpower through human resource development.
- To encourage Research & Development in the field of Transfusion Medicine and related technology.
- To take adequate regulatory and legislative steps for monitoring and evaluation of blood transfusion services and to take steps to eliminate profiteering in blood banks.

Strategies

To reiterate firmly the Govt. commitment to provide safe and adequate quantity of blood, blood components and blood products.

A national blood transfusion Programme shall be developed to ensure establishment of non-profit integrated National and State Blood Transfusion Services in the country.

Trading in blood i.e. Sale & purchase of blood shall be prohibited.

Transfusion Services shall be promoted for making available of safe blood to the people.

Due to the special requirement of Armed Forces in remote border areas, necessary amendments shall be made in the Drugs & Cosmetics Act/Rules to provide special licenses to small garrison units. These units shall also be responsible for the civilian blood needs of the region.

To make available adequate resources to develop and reorganize the blood transfusion services in the entire country.

National & State Blood Transfusion Councils shall be supported/strengthened financially by pooling resources from various existing programmes and if possible by raising funds from international/bilateral agencies.

Efforts shall be directed to make the blood transfusion service viable through non-profit recovery system.

To make latest technology available for operating the blood transfusion services and ensure it's functioning in an updated manner.

Minimum standards for testing, processing and storage shall be set and ensured.

A Quality System Scheme shall be introduced in all blood centres.

Regular proficiency testing of personnel shall be introduced in all the blood centres.

An External Quality Assessment Scheme (EQAS) through the referral laboratories approved by the National Blood Transfusion Council shall be introduced to assist participating centres in achieving higher standards and uniformity.

Efforts shall be made towards indigenization of kits, equipment and consumables used in blood banks.

Use of automation shall be encouraged to manage higher workload with increased efficiency.

A mechanism for transfer of technology shall be developed to ensure the availability of state-of-the-art technology from outside.

Each blood centre shall develop its own Standard Operating Procedures on various aspects of Blood Banking.

All blood centres shall adhere to bio-safety guidelines as provided in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare manual 'Hospital acquired Infections: Guidelines for Control' and disposal of bio hazardous waste as per the provisions of the existing Biomedical Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules.

To launch extensive awareness programmes for donor information, education, motivation, recruitment and retention in order to ensure adequate availability of safe blood.

Efforts shall be directed towards recruitment and retention of voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors through education and awareness programmes.

Enrolment of safe donors shall be ensured.

State Blood Transfusion Councils shall recognize the services of regular voluntary non-remunerated blood donors and donor organizers appropriately.

National/State Blood Transfusion Councils shall develop and launch an IEC campaign using all channels of communication including mass-media for promotion of voluntary blood donation and generation of awareness regarding dangers of blood from paid donors and procurement of blood from unauthorized blood banks/laboratories.

National / State blood transfusion councils shall involve other departments / sectors for promoting voluntary blood donations.

To encourage appropriate clinical use of blood and blood products. Blood shall be used only when necessary.

Blood and blood products shall be transfused only to treat conditions leading to significant morbidity and mortality that cannot be prevented or treated effectively by other means.

National Guidelines on 'Clinical use of Blood' shall be made available and updated as required from time to time.

Effective and efficient clinical use of blood shall be promoted in accordance with guidelines.

Education and training in effective clinical use of blood shall be organized.

Blood and its components shall be prescribed only by a medical practitioner registered as per the provisions of Medical Council Act.

Availability of blood components shall be ensured through the network of regional centres, satellite centres and other blood centres by creating adequate number of blood component separation units.

Appropriate steps shall be taken to increase the availability of plasma fractions as per the need of the country through expanding the capacity of existing centre and establishing new centres in the country.

Adequate facilities for transporting blood and blood products including proper cold-chain maintenance shall be made available to ensure appropriate management of blood supply.

Guidelines for management of blood supply during natural and man-made disasters shall be made available.

To strengthen the man power through human resource development. Transfusion Medicine shall be treated as a specialty.

In all the existing courses for nurses, technicians and pharmacists, Transfusion Medicine shall be incorporated as one of the subjects.

In-service training programmes shall be organised for all categories of personnel working in blood centres as well as drug inspectors and other officers from regulatory agencies.

Appropriate modules for training of Donor Organisers/Donor Recruitment Officers shall be developed to facilitate regular and uniform training programmes to be conducted in all States.

Short orientation training cum advocacy programmes on donor motivation and recruitment shall be organised for Community Based Organisations(CBOs) and NGOs who wish to participate in Voluntary Blood Donor Recruitment Programme.

Inter-country and intra-country exchange for training and experience of personnel associated with blood centres shall be encouraged to improve quality of Blood Transfusion Service.

States shall create a separate cadre and opportunities for promotions for suitably trained medical and para medical personnel working in blood transfusion services.

To encourage Research & Development in the field of Transfusion Medicine and related technology

A technical resource core group at national level shall be created to co-ordinate research and development in the country. Multi-centric research initiatives on issues related to Blood Transfusion shall be encouraged.

To take appropriate decisions and/or introduction of policy initiatives on the basis of factual information, operational research on various aspects such as various aspects of Transfusion Transmissible Diseases, Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) among donors, clinical use of blood, need assessment etc shall be promoted.

Computer based information and management systems shall be developed which can be used by all the centres regularly to facilitate networking.

To take adequate regulatory and legislative steps for monitoring and evaluation of blood transfusion services and to take steps to eliminate profiteering in blood banks.

For grant/renewal of blood bank licenses including plan of a blood bank, a committee, comprising of members from State Blood Transfusion Councils including Transfusion Medicine expert, Central & State shall be constituted which will scrutinize all applications as per the guidelines provided by Drugs Controller General .

Fresh licenses to stand-alone blood banks in private sector shall not be granted. Renewal of such blood banks shall be subjected to thorough scrutiny and shall not be renewed in case of noncompliance of any condition of license.

As a deterrent to paid blood donors who operate in the disguise of replacement donors, institutions who prescribe blood for transfusion shall be made responsible for procurement of blood for their patients through their affiliation with licensed blood centres.

States shall enact rules for registration of nursing homes wherein provisions for affiliation with a licensed blood bank for procurement of blood for their patients shall be incorporated.