

NIGERIAN NATIONAL BLOOD POLICY

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**National Blood Transfusion Service
Federal Ministry of Health,
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THE NATIONAL BLOOD POLICY

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Draft National Blood Policy

I. PREAMBLE

1. A National Blood Transfusion Service should be an integral part of every National Healthcare system. However in Nigeria, blood banking and transfusion services have been fragmented, uncoordinated and unregulated and safety was not satisfactory despite earlier efforts at policy development and some level of implementation. Recent concerted efforts have produced the following results:

- (i) Formal establishment of the National Blood Transfusion Service with two(2) functional Zonal centres located in Kaduna and Owerri.
- (ii) Establishment of a Demonstration Blood Centre in Abuja with Safe Blood for Africa Foundation (SBFAF) as technical partners.
- (iii) Inauguration of an Advisory National Technical Committee.

2. A baseline data survey was conducted during the last week of August 2005. The survey indicated evidence of divergent and unsatisfactory practices everywhere. The survey revealed that only about half a million units of blood were collected from private and public sources in the previous one year. This is grossly inadequate for a country of about 120 million people. At our current level of health care delivery, it is estimated that about 1.5million units of blood per annum is required.

3. Furthermore, the survey revealed that in the public sector 25% and 75% respectively are commercial and replacement donor whilst voluntary non-remunerated donors are negligible. In the private sector, the reverse obtains with 75% and 25% respectively being commercial and replacement donors whilst voluntary donors are insignificant. This is a very unsatisfactory situation which should not be allowed to continue. This evidence-based appraisal underscores the urgent need for a system that will address the issue of transfusion practice and blood safety in Nigeria.

4. There is need to build on an earlier initiative by producing a revised National Blood Policy which must be backed by appropriate legislation and regulation.

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II. POLICY STATEMENT

5. Blood therapy is a lifesaving component of modern health care worldwide. It is essential that blood products be available and accessible to the generality of Nigerians irrespective of gender, geopolitical setting, socioeconomic standing, cultural background and other societal variables. Such blood should be sourced from low-risk voluntary non-remunerated blood donors.

III. VISION

6. The Federal Government, through the Federal Ministry of Health, accepts the ultimate responsibility to provide comprehensive Blood Transfusion Service in Nigeria by establishing an efficient National Blood Service. In pursuance of this goal, a National Policy on Blood Service is being established. The vision is to have a quality national blood service, complying to international standards, which will be acknowledged as being one of the best in Africa

IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

7. The major guiding principles are:
- There is at present no effective or acceptable alternative to human blood for therapeutic use.
 - Human blood and tissues are scarce national resources which should not be traded like commodities.
 - A good blood transfusion policy should facilitate the provision of safe and adequate blood and blood products for the population.
 - Blood from regular, voluntary and altruistic, non-remunerated donors has been proven worldwide to be the safest for therapy.
 - Donated blood, being a scarce national resource must be shared equitably and used in the most effective and efficient manner.
 - The procurement and administration of blood must protect and promote the health not only of the recipient but also the donor.
 - The experience and recommendation of international bodies of experts such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) and others is that a nationally organized, coordinated and regulated blood programme is the best way to achieve the desired goals.

V. MISSION

8. The mission of the National Blood Service is to provide safe, quality and adequate blood in an equitable and cost- effective manner to all people resident in Nigeria.

VI. OBJECTIVES

9. The objectives of this policy shall be to:-
- Establish and coordinate blood transfusion services on a country-wide basis within the National Health Plan.
 - Develop a system of blood donor mobilization and motivation based entirely on voluntary non remunerative donation of blood
 - Standardize the methods of collection, transportation, processing, testing, storage and distribution of blood and blood components and derivatives which are safe for transfusion and other medical therapy.
 - Ensure rational and optimal use of blood products.
 - Provide the modalities for manpower recruitment, training, professional and career development to satisfy the needs of the system.
 - Encourage technology development and research into all aspects of blood transfusion.
 - Maintain a cost effective and sustainable service through appropriate budgeting and judicious use of funds.
 - Maintain a system of total quality management (TQM) and haemovigilance at all levels of the service.
 - Ensure the equitable distribution of equipment and consumables
 - Establish a data information support system.
 - Ensure universal compliance with existing legislation and regulation of Blood Services.
 - Relate and co-operate with international organizations and other stakeholders in the field of blood safety.

VII. THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICE COMMISSION

10. An autonomous National Blood Service Commission (NBSC) shall be established by legislation. It shall run a National Blood Service (NBS) which shall be integrated into the National Health Programme. The NBSC shall be responsible to the Minister of Health while the management of the National Blood Service (NBS) shall be the responsibility of the Commission.

11. The National Blood Service Commission (NBSC) shall implement its objectives under the following organisational structure:

- National Blood Service Commission Governing Board
- NBS Headquarters
- National Reference Centre
- Zonal Blood Service Centres
- State Blood Service Centres
- Local Government Area Blood Service Centres
- Special Units (Armed Forces, Police, Tertiary Health Institutions, NGOs and Private Blood banks)

12. The NBSC shall have sole regulatory control and authority over all blood transfusion services nationwide.

13. The Governing Board of the National Blood Service Commission shall consist of:

- A Chairman to be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Honourable Minister of Health.
- The Director-General of the National Blood Service, who shall be Secretary to the Board.
- The Director of Hospital Services.
- The Director of Health Planning and Research.
- The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Finance.
- One representative from each of the six geopolitical zones to represent public interest.
- One representative of the Nigeria Society of Haematology and Blood Transfusion.
- One representative of the Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria.
- One representative of the Nigeria Medical Association.
- The Director of the Armed Forces Medical Service
- One representative of the Police Force Medical Service.
- One representative of the National Association of Nigerian Nurses and Midwives.
- One representative of the Nigeria Red Cross Society.

14. The National Blood Service Commission (NBSC) shall:

- be the sole regulatory authority for all blood services nationwide.
- employ suitable persons to work in the National Blood Service (NBS)
- accredit blood transfusion service facilities throughout the country
- exercise appropriate financial control over the NBS
- be responsible for the appointment promotion and discipline of senior staff of the NBS
- have power to set up committees and bodies of experts to carry out specific functions or tasks on its behalf, relating to the functioning of the NBS.
- regulate, co-ordinate and supervise all the blood transfusion services in the country.

VIII. THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICE (NBS)

15. The National Blood Service (NBS) shall be headed by a Director General who shall:

- be the Chief Executive and accounting officer, appointed by the Honourable Minister of Health.
- be medically qualified with a Fellowship of the National Postgraduate Medical College or its equivalent, preferably in Blood Transfusion.

- be responsible for the day to day running of the NBS.
16. The tenure of the Director-General shall be four years, renewable only once.
17. There shall be a Management Committee of the NBS comprising the Director General, other Directors and the principal officers.
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18. The functions of the NBS shall be the following:
- Set standards and issue guidelines for the practice of blood transfusion in Nigeria.
 - Coordinate and supervise the activities of Zonal and State Blood Services, including the Federal Capital Territory, to ensure compliance with the policy decisions of the Commission.
 - Develop blood donor recruitment strategies nationwide.
 - Monitor all blood banks in the country.
 - Identify training needs and provide modalities to satisfy them.
 - Collate, analyze and publish information relating to blood service in the country.
 - Set up a National haemovigilance system.
 - Develop quality assurance programmes and promote research into all aspects of blood service.
 - Promote the appropriate use of blood products (homologous and autologous) and alternatives such as haematinics, colloids and crystalloids.
 - Perform any other functions as may be directed by the Commission.

IX. THE NATIONAL REFERENCE CENTRE

19. The National Reference center shall be headed by a Director, who shall be a university graduate in Medical Laboratory Science with post graduate qualification preferably a doctorate degree in blood transfusion science.

20. Its functions shall be:

- Certification of the quality of all reagents, blood products and derivatives produced in or imported into Nigeria;
- Installation and maintenance of a national panel of rare blood groups and fluids.
- Production, collection and distribution of blood grouping reagents, stable derivatives and rare sera.
- Maintenance of quality assurance system.
- Research into all aspects of blood transfusion science.

X. ZONAL BLOOD SERVICE CENTRES

21. The Commission shall establish Zonal Blood Service Centres in each of the six geopolitical zones in the country. These centres shall be the headquarters of all transfusion activities within the respective zones.

22. The Zonal Centre shall be headed by a Zonal Coordinator who is preferably medically qualified and has acquired training in administration of a blood service.

23. The Zonal Coordinator shall be responsible for the day to day activities of the Zonal Centre and relate to all blood service activities within the zone.

24. The Zonal Coordinator shall report directly to the Director-General.

25. The Zonal Centre shall provide a model blood service for the zone where it is located.

26. The centre shall also serve as a reference centre for all transfusion activities within the respective zone.

27. The Zonal Coordinator shall organize the haemovigilance system within the zone.

XI. STATES AND LGAs BLOOD SERVICE CENTRES

28. State and LGAs shall establish their Blood Service Centres under the guidelines of the NBS and such State and LGA Service Centres shall be subject to regulation by the NBS.

29. The State Blood Service Centre shall be headed by a State Coordinator who is preferably medically qualified and has acquired training in administration of a blood service.

30. The LGA Blood Service Centres shall be headed by a nominee of the State Coordinator and shall have relevant training and experience.

31. Donor recruitment and blood collection shall be done at centres so designated by the State Coordinator.

32. Blood Service of Tertiary Health Institutions shall relate to the State or Zonal Blood Service Centres in their State or Zones.

XII. ARMED FORCES BLOOD SERVICE

33. The Armed Forces shall operate a Blood Service under the guidelines of the NBS and shall be subject to regulation by the NBS.
34. The Armed Forces Blood Service Centre shall be headed by a medically qualified person with comparable qualifications to a Zonal Coordinator.
35. Training opportunities for blood bank staff shall be extended to the Armed Forces by the NBS.
36. Donor recruitment and blood collection may be performed in collaboration with Zonal Centres in order to pool resources.
37. Specialized screening of blood may be performed at Zonal Centres if facilities are not available at the Armed Forces Blood Service Centre.
38. The Armed Forces Blood Service Centre(s) shall relate with the respective Zonal Blood Service Centre in the zone.

XIII. PRIVATE AND OTHER NON GOVERNMENTAL HEALTH ESTABLISHMENTS

39. Health establishments within the State, run by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or private establishment may maintain blood-banking facilities only. Their activities may include the collection of blood from donors only if they are so designated by the State Coordinator.
40. They shall be accredited by the Commission to operate a blood bank and shall comply with all the guidelines issued by the National Blood Service.

XIV. BLOOD DONOR RECRUITMENT

41. Blood donations shall be based on the principle of regular, voluntary, non-remunerative donation.
42. Financial reward for blood or blood component donation shall be prohibited. Donor appreciation by the giving of tokens, certificates, badges and direct transport expense refunds are acceptable.
43. Donor motivation and mobilization shall be promoted through extensive awareness programmes by organized donor drives, IEC materials, schools and public campaigns, print and electronic media, jingles, billboards, posters and other methods.
44. Attention to donor safety, care and comfort shall be enforced throughout the National Blood Service.

45. Donor selection, deferral and counseling and appropriate record keeping shall be as specified in the NBS guidelines.
46. Family replacement donation system shall be gradually phased out as voluntary donation programmes become established.
47. Specific training shall be given to workers in the donor units to promote efficiency and donor friendly attitudes.
48. Cooperation shall be sought from local communities, government authorities, non-governmental and voluntary agencies and faith-based organizations in the motivation and mobilization of voluntary donors.
49. Blood collection from prospective donors recruited by communities, non-governmental and voluntary agencies, faith-based organizations and private organizations shall be done only at designated centres.

XV. PROCESSING OF BLOOD

50. All donor blood for transfusion shall be screened for specified Transfusion-Transmissible Infections including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B and C and Syphilis.
51. It shall be an offence to issue or transfuse unscreened blood or blood components.
52. All handling and processing of blood and record keeping shall conform with technical guidelines issued by the NBS.
53. The principle of 'cold chain' at appropriate temperature shall be maintained for storage and transportation of blood products throughout the NBS.
54. Compliance with National Technical guidelines by all Blood Services nationwide shall be monitored and verified by an Inspectorate System organized by the Directorate of Clinical Services of the NBS. Sanctions shall be applied where necessary.
55. National cross-border exchange of blood and blood products shall be with the explicit approval of the Honourable Minister of Health.

XVI. APPROPRIATE USE OF BLOOD

56. Prescription and administration of blood and blood products shall be under the authority of a registered medical practitioner.

57. NBS Technical guidelines with appropriate record keeping and haemovigilance shall be observed by all health personnel handling and /or administering blood and blood products.
58. National sufficiency in blood and blood products supply shall be promoted and wastage reduced, through a "bridging" system (i.e. moving excess blood products to areas of demand) throughout the NBS.
59. To maximize the benefits of blood therapy, the NBS shall promote the application of internationally accepted principles of blood component therapy including autologous techniques.
60. The use of alternatives to blood such as colloids, crystalloids and haematinics where appropriate shall be promoted by the NBS.
61. Strategies for the reduction of transfusion requirements such as prevention and early diagnosis and treatment of anaemia shall be promoted by the NBS.
62. The establishment of State and Hospital Transfusion Committees under the guidelines issued by the NBS shall be promoted throughout the country.
63. In order to augment national blood supply the NBSC may, with the permission of the Honourable Minister of Health, enter into bilateral agreements for the supply of blood components etc.

XVII. PERSONNEL AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

64. The principle of professionalism shall be applied to all operations of the NBS.
65. Conditions of service within the NBS shall be determined by the NBSC and shall conform to the guidelines in the Public Service.
66. Appointments, promotion and discipline of senior staff of the NBS shall be carried out by the NBSC while junior staff matters are handled by the management of the NBS.
67. Programmes of orientation, continuous education and in-service training shall be established for all categories of staff within the NBS.

68. Career structures which do not already exist in the public service shall be established to meet the peculiar needs of the NBS and appropriate training programmes created to produce the required cadres.

69. The NBSC shall encourage and cooperate with higher educational institutions in Nigeria to establish training programmes in Blood Transfusion Medicine and Science.

70. All workers in the NBS shall require cover by a form of professional indemnity.

XVIII. TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH

71. Appropriate and uniform technology shall be applied as far as possible throughout the operations of the NBS.

72. The NBS shall fund research and development of appropriate local technology.

XIX. FUNDING

73. Funding of the NBS shall primarily be the responsibility of the Federal, State and Local governments of Nigeria. The Federal government shall be responsible for funding the operations of the NBS at Federal and Zonal levels while the State and Local governments shall fund operations at State and Local Government Area levels respectively.

74. With appropriate authorization, additional funds and other forms of assistance may be sought by the NBSC from international donor agencies, multilateral agreement, non-governmental organizations and others.

75. While the NBS shall be guided by the principle of 'not – for – profit' organization, it shall conduct its operations with a view towards cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

76. The practice of partial cost-recovery shall apply throughout the service.

XX. QUALITY ASSURANCE

77. National standards for the accreditation of blood services shall be established by the Commission.

78. Operational Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for all areas of service shall be developed by National Blood Service (NBS) and shall be applied universally.

79. A system of Internal Quality Control and External Quality Assurance shall be set up and supervised by the National Reference Centre.

80. The NBSC shall conform with the Factory Act, Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Food and Drug Regulations and WHO Technical Guidelines where relevant.

XXI. RECORDS AND DATA SYSTEM

81. NBS shall ensure that appropriate records are kept in a uniform and specified manner while confidentiality is maintained.

82. An inventory system for all stock shall be established.

83. All operations of the NBS shall be computerized.

XXII. EQUIPMENT

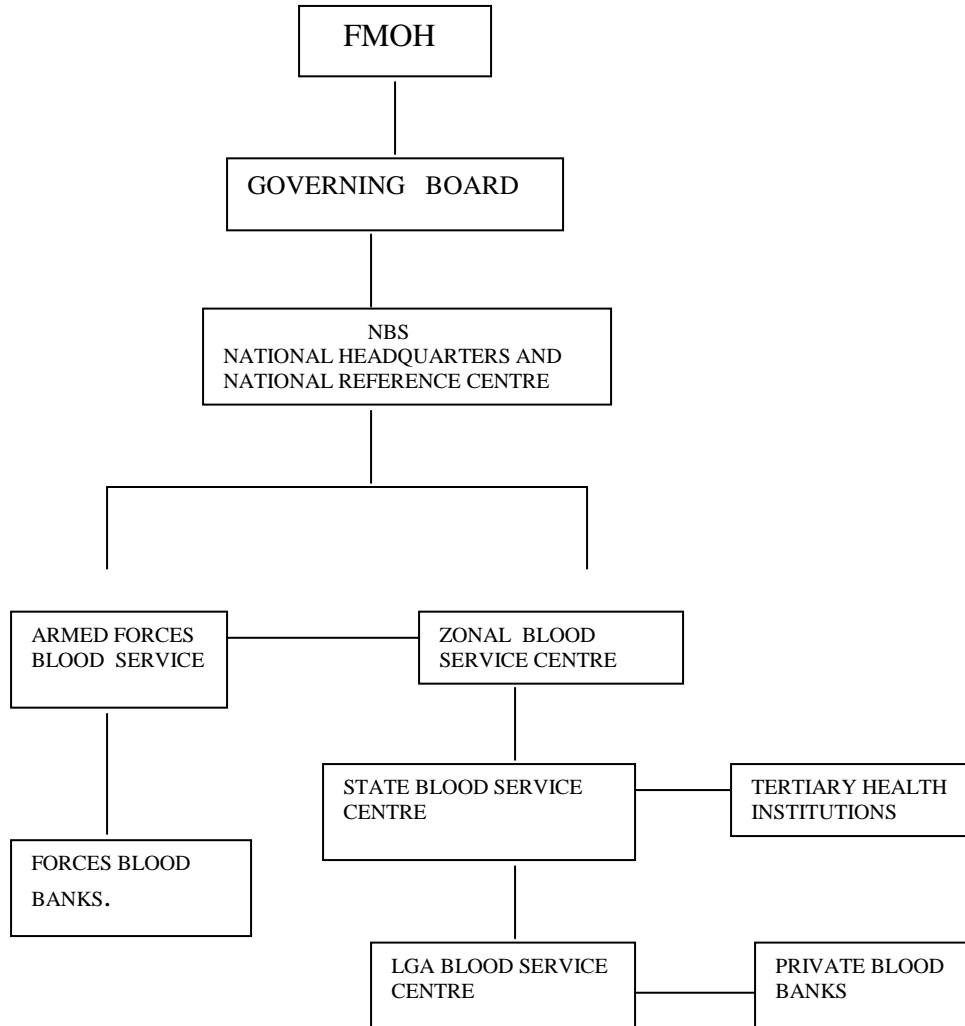
84. The National Headquarters shall give standard guidelines for the purchase of equipment and consumables.

85. The National Blood Service shall ensure regular supply of consumables to the service.

XXIII. LEGISLATION

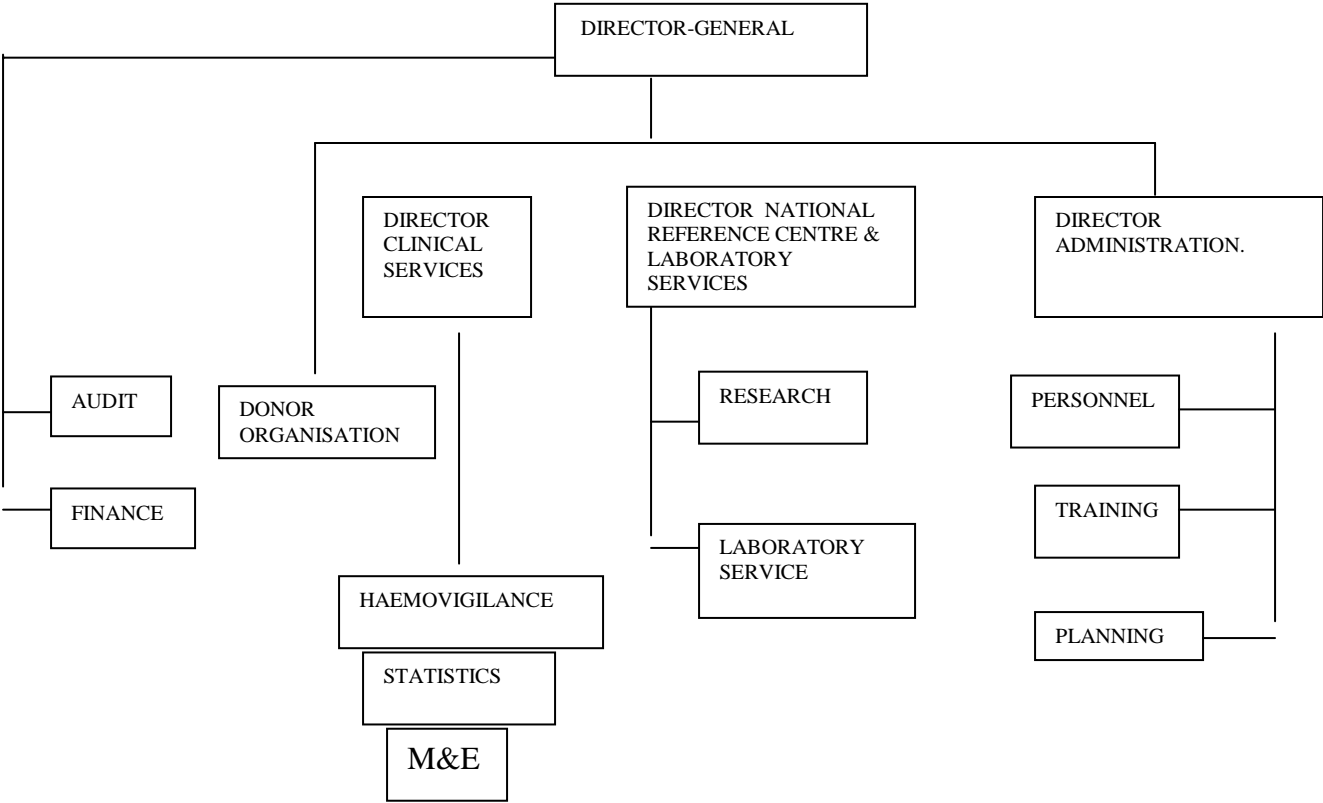
86. This policy shall be backed by appropriate legislation.

THE NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICE COMMISSION AND RELATED BODIES



APPENDIX II

ORGANISATIONAL CHART AT THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS



APPENDIX I11

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AT THE STATE CENTRE

