AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 924
(I-18)

Introduced by: Georgia

Subject: Utilizing Blood from “Therapeutic” Donations

Referred to: Reference Committee K
(Darlyne Menscer, MD, Chair)

Whereas, Hemochromatosis, a chronic iron overload condition, is the most common genetic disorder found in the U.S.¹; and

Whereas, The treatment for hemochromatosis involves routine phlebotomies once a hematocrit reaches above 45%, to prevent excessive iron deposition into organs such as the liver, pancreas, and the heart¹; and

Whereas, The withdrawn blood is for “therapeutic” purposes and can only be donated to a limited number of organizations², becoming waste product. The lack of having to pay a copay is considered a “financial incentive” by the Red Cross, thus they do not accept blood from these donors, despite facing blood shortages³; and

Whereas, This iron-rich blood could be utilized for hemorrhage control during traumas or provided to individuals who present with one of the many causes of anemia, locally and worldwide; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association advocate for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to engage in dialogue with the Red Cross to reanalyze their donor eligibility criteria, to accept blood from a broader category of individuals, including but not limited to hereditary hemochromatosis. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 10/23/18

¹ NIH Hemochromatosis Information; https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/hereditary-hemochromatosis#statistics
RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Use of Blood Therapeutically Drawn from Hemochromatosis Patients H-50.979
Our AMA: (1) encourages physicians to explain to their patients that hereditary hemochromatosis (HH) has a genetic basis, that the disease is not transmissible via blood transfusions, and that the blood from persons with HH is not necessarily unsuitable for direct transfusion; and (2) recommends against the unlabeled use for direct transfusion of blood drawn therapeutically from persons with hereditary hemochromatosis (HH) until a means to ensure their altruistic intent is available, such as when therapeutic phlebotomies are available at no charge to persons requiring them.
Citation: (CSA Rep. 1, A-99; Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 1, A-09)