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16th International AIDS Conference

Toronto, Canada - August 13 - 18, 2006

TRANSFUSION TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS AMONG BLOOD DONORS AT A SOUTH INDIAN CITY

Int Conf AIDS. 2006 Aug 13-18;16 Abstract No. TuPE0299

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BACKGROUND: Blood unscreened for Transfusion Transmissible Infections (TTI) is a major public health problem. The prevalence of HIV, HBV, HCV and Syphilis among Blood Donors reflects the status in the community. The objective of the study is to find out the prevalence among blood donors and changing trends, analyse the gender variation and the differences between voluntary and relative donors over a decade.

METHODS: A retrospective study was designed to collect the data of TTI among blood donors in the blood bank of a teaching hospital in South India from January 1996 - January 2007. The profile of the blood donors (100,002) for the same period was also collected. The data were analyzed by simple statistical methods.

RESULTS: The prevalence of HIV ranged from 1.57 - 0.10%, was twice as common in males than in females and 6 times more common among replacement compared to voluntary donors. One donor tested positive for either of the TTI in every 125 donors. Overall the prevalence of HIV, HBV, HCV & syphilis among blood donors was 0.53, 1.76, 0.76 & 0.14% respectively. The positive status was more among males than females and replacement than voluntary donors irrespective of the TTI.

CONCLUSIONS: The rates of TTI have come down over the years which can possibly be attributed to the stringent enforcement of donor selection measures. Since the TTI status was higher among replacement donor system, it has to be discouraged. In view of the changing trends, it is likely that prevalence of TTI among Blood Donors may not reflect the distribution in the population. Hence it is recommended that community based sentinel surveillance is essential for understanding the actual

situation.

2006-08-13
TuPE0299

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