

## India may become reliable source for safe blood to overseas patients by 2014: Dr Surinder Singh

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India will become a haven for supply of safe blood and blood transfusion services to international patients by 2014, and the efforts are on to achieve the goal, according to Dr Surinder Singh, director of national institute of biologicals (NIB), New Delhi.

The country's haemovigilance programme (HPI) will expunge the concerns of overseas patients in receiving blood from Indian people and we will soon become the number one country to supply safe blood to foreign patients, said Dr Singh while inaugurating the haemovigilance awareness programme at Amrita Hospital at Kochi in Kerala.

He said administration of blood and blood products can sometimes lead to adverse reactions. A set of surveillance procedures covering the whole transfusion chain from the collection of blood and its components to the follow up of its recipients is required. The HPI is intended to collect and assess information on unexpected or undesirable effects resulting from the therapeutic use of labile blood products and prevent their occurrence and recurrence. Haemovigilance is a tool to improve quality of blood transfusion chain, primarily focusing on safety.

The data recorded in blood bank centres can be reported to the National Coordinating Centre which will collate and analyze them in order to formulate safety related regulatory decisions. Further, this analysis will help in appropriate revision of blood transfusion guidelines, amendments to the national blood policy and bringing changes in the Drugs and Cosmetic Act & Rules, said he.

The programme will be coordinated through a network of 2545 blood banks functioning under central and state drug control authorities and the clinicians and technicians in the units will be trained in a phased manner. Apart from promotion of safe blood transfusion and blood product administration, HPI envisages assurance of donor and recipient safety and the confidence of overseas patients.

Sources in the Kerala drugs control department said a participation of 180 blood banks and hospitals was at the awareness program organised by NIB.

The director said in the International Haemovigilance Network (IHN) only 28 countries have been enrolled now. Japan and Singapore are the countries enlisted from Asia.

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