

Strasbourg, 28/03/2007

MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON BLOOD TRANSFUSION

In continuation with the work of the former Committee of Experts in Blood Transfusion and Immunohaematology (SP-HM), the Steering Committee on Blood Transfusion of the Council of Europe (CD-P-TS) held its first meeting, under the aegis of the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM), on 20-21 of March 2007 in Strasbourg in the new premises of the EDQM.

During the meeting, Dr. Jeroen De Wit, a Dutch national, was elected as chair of the Steering Committee for the period 2007 to 2008. The Steering Committee had a preliminary intensive and lively discussion of its work programme and also nominated a working group with the mandate to discuss the revision and update of the 'Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components'. A representative from the EU Commission (DG Sanco) and from WHO Headquarters Geneva were present and expressed their interest in an active collaboration with the CD-P-TS.

The CD-P-TS will continue with the programmes initiated by the Council of Europe in 1956 and undertakes:

- to assist members states in improving blood transfusion services by promoting the principle of voluntary non-remunerated donations ;
- to define and promote the implementation of quality and safety standards in blood and blood components collection, storage, distribution and use ;
- to propose ethical, safety and quality standards on professional practices ;
- to ensure the transfer of knowledge and expertise through training and networking ;
- to monitor practices in Europe and assess epidemiological risks linked to blood and its components in particular for new transmissible diseases, and
- to ensure the availability of rare blood products by means of the European Bank of Frozen Blood of Rare Groups.

By means of its activities in the field of transfusion, the Council of Europe contributes actively to the implementation of high standards for the protection of public health and for the promotion of human rights and dignity.

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Notes for the Editors:

Jeroen Hieronymus Johannes Camilles de Wit

Drs. Jeroen de Wit (1953), a Dutch national, graduated in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences from the University of Groningen. He continued his studies in pharmaceutical technology and radio-pharmacy and was awarded a Masters degree in 1979 and a pharmaceutical degree in 1980. He began working in 1980 as a hospital pharmacist at the Central Pharmacy of the hospitals in The Hague and was appointed the Head of pharmaceutical production.

In 1982, he began co-operation with the Red Cross Blood Bank The Hague in the field of research on the influence of anticoagulant on the yield and quality of clotting factor VIII preparations. He was also a blood bank consultant in good manufacturing practice (GMP). He became officially registered as hospital pharmacist in 1982.

From 1982 to 1986, he was appointed Director of the Red Cross Blood Bank Friesland in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands. His special interest is in the production of heat-treated factor VIII concentrate, component production and quality assurance, quality control and immunohaematology. After a merger with the Blood Bank Groningen-Drenthe he became Director of Blood Bank Noord Nederland. In 1998 all Dutch Blood banks and CLB in Amsterdam merged to form one Foundation and since then he has served on the Executive Board (since 2001 as Vice-chairman) with a special responsibility for the Blood Banking part of Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation.

He was President of the Dutch Blood Transfusion Society, Chairman of the Dutch Federation of Red Cross Blood banks and is currently Vice-president of the European Blood Alliance.