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EDQM PARTICIPATES IN THE 23RD REGIONAL CONGRESS OF THE ISBT

The European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM, Council of Europe) will participate in the upcoming 23rd Regional Congress of the International Society Blood Transfusion (ISBT) that will take place in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, from 2-5 June 2013. This event is especially significant as the EDQM will present its new edition of the *Guide to the Preparation, Use and Quality Assurance of Blood Components* (17th Edition 2013).

The work of the Council of Europe in the field of blood transfusion started in the 1950s. The European Committee on Blood Transfusion (CD-P-TS), the Steering Committee in charge of blood transfusion activities for the EDQM, works on the ethical, legal and organisational aspects of blood transfusion with a view to ensuring quality, increasing availability, avoiding wastage and ensuring optimal use of blood and blood components. The CD-P-TS, assisted by leading European experts, is responsible for producing regular updates of the Guide.

The Guide contains recommendations on blood collection, blood components, technical procedures, transfusion practices and quality systems for blood establishments and, thus, describes a set of measures designed to ensure the safety, quality and efficacy of blood components. One major new addition to the Guide is Appendix 1, entitled "Interim elements of Good Practice Guidelines for Blood Establishments and Hospital Blood Banks", which provides harmonised standards for the implementation of quality management for blood transfusion. It represents a harmonised 'gold standard' for blood transfusion services.

It is intended for health professionals working in transfusion services and establishments, hospitals and regulatory authorities. The Guide is available in book and online formats, both in English and French.

If you wish to meet the EDQM staff during this Congress, please come to booth No. 224. We look forward to speaking to you. For more information, please visit: www.edqm.eu/en/edqm-fairs-and-exhibitions-254.html.

For more information on the Guide and how to order, please visit the EDQM website: www.edqm.eu/en/blood-organ-guides-1131.html.

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Note for the Editor: Further information is available on the internet site www.edqm.eu

The EDQM is a leading organisation that protects public health by enabling development, supporting implementation, and monitoring the application of quality standards for safe medicines and their safe use. Our standards are recognised as a scientific benchmark world-wide. The European Pharmacopoeia is legally-binding in European Member States. Similarly, the EDQM develops guidance and standards in the areas of blood transfusion, organ transplantation and consumer health issues.

¹There are now thirty-eight members of the [European Pharmacopoeia](#) Commission: *Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the European Union*. There are twenty-four observers: *the World Health Organization (WHO); 5 member states of the Council of Europe - Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and the Russian Federation; and 18 other countries in the world - Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Israel, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Singapore, Senegal, Syria, Tunisia, United States of America*.

A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.