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EDQM and EU Commission discuss improving plasma supply management and donor protection

The EDQM and the European Commission (EC) brought together stakeholders involved in the field of plasma to discuss ways forward for improving plasma supply management and donor protection, during a symposium organised in Strasbourg on 29 and 30 January 2019. As emphasised by those present at the meeting, this was the first time that all stakeholders in the sector had met to exchange their views on how to increase the supply of plasma for fractionation in Europe, while ensuring adequate protection of both donors and patients.

During the symposium it was acknowledged that the steady growth in demand for Plasma-Derived Medicinal Products (PDMPs) over the past years has led to a considerable rise in the demand for plasma for fractionation. Increasing the availability of plasma for fractionation is seen as one of the main strategies by which shortages of PDMPs needed in Europe to treat patients with life-threatening diseases can be avoided.

The latest scientific knowledge on the short-term effects of intensive plasmapheresis programmes on the health of donors was also discussed. Evidence from programmes conducted across Europe was presented and it was suggested that it could be used to identify appropriate donor protection measures. Recommendations for increasing plasma collection by apheresis and making better use of recovered plasma were also put forward by participants in the symposium. The EDQM will publish more detail on recommendations discussed during the symposium in due course.

All the evidence and data presented will be duly taken into account in the context of the revision of the EDQM's 19th edition of the Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components. The work of the EDQM in the field of blood transfusion is based on principles aligned with fundamental human rights, as outlined in the European Convention on Human Rights, one of the first treaties of the Council of Europe. In its work in the field of blood transfusion, which began in the 1950s, the EDQM co-operates closely with the Directorate General Health and Food Safety of the European Commission on various topics in the field of substances of human origin.

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Note for the Editor: Further information is available on the internet site **https://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 worldwide. The European Pharmacopoeia is legally binding in member states[1]. Similarly, the EDQM develops guidance and standards in the areas of blood transfusion, organ transplantation and consumer health issues.

[1]There are thirty-nine members of the European Pharmacopoeia Commission: *Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the European Union.*

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