

16 April 2020

The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP
Minister for Health and Medical Research
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister

Blood Donations

I write to request that the NSW Government consider, adopt and advocate for a reduction in the current deferral period for blood donations from 12 to three months in line with recommendations from Therapeutic Goods Administration for various groups, including for men who have sex with men.

Current guidelines prohibiting cohorts including men who have had sex with other men in the past twelve months from donating blood is not supported by data and is discriminatory, reinforcing unfair myths, stereotypes and assumptions. I share community support for a non-discriminatory blood donation policy based on evidence.

Accumulating scientific evidence demonstrates that three months after contact with a blood borne infection is an adequate period for detection purposes, leading a number of international regulators to reduce deferral periods for donors from high-risk sexual practices including the UK, Canada and the USA.

During the current COVID-19 pandemic it is vital that blood donations are available to save lives.

Yesterday, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood application to reduce the deferral period for donors of whole blood with a sexual activity-based risk factor from 12 to three months since the last sexual contact. This decision was supported by the Advisory Committee on Biologicals.

Could you please liaise with other jurisdictions to promptly review guidelines in line with recommendations from the TGA for blood donation and inform me what action you will take?

Yours sincerely



Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney

