Blood and plasma donors: suitability and screening. Recommendation

1997/0315(CNS) - 10/12/1997 - Document attached to the procedure

In a working document annexed to the procedure, the services of the European Commission presented the results of an inquiry conducted in the spring of 1997 into donations of blood within the Union. This study provided a basis for the Commission's presentation of a proposal for a Council regulation on suitability of blood donors and the screening of donated blood. In essence, the results collected from all 15 Member States provided information on the following aspects: - The provisions relating to blood varied between Member States. They included acts, decrees, regulations and guidelines. - The donor selection criteria were generally consistent, with a few rare variations from one Member State to another (for example, age between 18 and 65, haemoglobin, pulse, blood pressure, weight, frequency and maximum volume of donation). - Provisions relating to plasma were very similar to those for blood except as regards the frequency of donations and volume of plasma taken (higher). - The inquiry into the arrangements for physical examination before donating blood showed that not all the Member States imposed this kind of examination on donors. On the other hand, with one exception, they did require all donors to complete a written questionnaire on each visit. - The main reasons for excluding a donor in the interests of the recipient's safety were again very similar: permanent exclusion of those recognised as positive for hepatitis B, AIDS I/II, etc. In other areas, the exclusion periods could vary (hepatitis A, infectious mononucleosis, etc.). - With regard to the screening test, all Member States undertook these, though they did not always relate to the same illnesses (the tests carried out by all Member States related to anti-HCV, anti-HIV 1/2 and HBsAg). - The interpretation of the reactive result of a screening test varied from one Member State to another: for this reason, at the time of the survey, it had been requested that use be made of algorithms such as those presented in the document.