Cross-Sectional Guidelines: Cutting Edge in Scientific Evidence and Practical Guidance

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On behalf of the entire Editorial Board we are pleased to announce the release of the English version of the Cross-Sectional Guidelines for Therapy with Blood Components and Plasma Derivatives published by the Board of the German Medical Association (Bundesärztekammer) on the recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Board in Issue 6, 2009, of TRANSFUSION MEDICINE AND HEMOTHERAPY [1].

We would like to thank Professor H. Klüter not only for being driving force in his position as Central Coordinator of the Standing Working Group 'Guidelines for Hemotherapy' but also to bring forward the idea to publish the English version of the Cross-Sectional Guidelines in the official journal of the German Society of Transfusion Medicine and Immunohematology (DGTI). Furthermore we would like to acknowledge the unrestricted willingness of the German Medical Association to permit reprinting in TRANSFUSION MEDICINE AND HEMOTHERAPY. The English translation was funded by the organizers of the European Symposium on 'Optimal Clinical Use of Blood Components' as stated below in more detail.

The present Cross-Sectional Guidelines reflect the current state of scientific knowledge in the field of transfusion medicine covering both the pharmaceutical preparation and the therapeutic application of cellular blood components and plasma derivatives. These guidelines were systematically and goal-orientedly developed by a Working Group of experts representing diverse medical societies and national authorities in Germany to end into interdisciplinarily compiled and highly accepted recommendations that allow for support the

decision-making of physicians in clinical hemotherapy. According to the general principles of evidence-based medicine, the level of evidence and the level of recommendation which based upon the risk-benefit assessment are indicated.

We follow the well-established tradition to thank with first priority all blood donors for their altruistic help and quote expressis verbis J.-D. Hoppe, P.C. Scriba and H. Klüter in their Preface to the Cross-Sectional Guidelines: 'To donate blood is an inestimable service of volunteers who contribute every day to help critically ill patients and to preserve life.' The responsible handling of blood components and plasma derivatives is therefore mandatory. The Cross-Sectional Guidelines released by the German Medical Association and its Standing Working Group 'Guidelines for Hemotherapy' summarize the current knowledge on the use of blood products in clinical medicine in a highly comprehensible form and thus offer a valuable assistance in achieving such a responsible handling. The publication of these guidelines in TRANSFUSION MEDICINE AND HEMOTHERAPY will hopefully contribute to a broad circulation and international perception of this highly valuable information to the benefit of all patients.

Reference

- 1 The Board of the German Medical Association on the Recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Board: Cross-Sectional Guidelines for Therapy with Blood Components and Plasma Derivatives. Transfus Med Hemother 2009;36(6).