



Media Advisory

Press Release

June 9, 2010

**Joint Letter
Gay Rights Organizations
Community Based Hemophilia Organizations**

**Regarding the MSM Blood Donor Deferral Policy
Before The
Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability
Department of Health and Human Services
June 10-11, 2010
The Universities at Shady Grove, Rockville, MD**

For More Information Contact:

Mark Skinner-World Federation of Hemophilia
202-253-8342, miskinner@wfh.org

Contact Information for other Coalition Partners:

Corey Dubin-Committee Of Ten Thousand
805 886-3846, coyote@silcom.com

Kimberly Haugstad-Hemophilia Federation of America
414 405-7042, k.haugstad@hemophiliafed.org

John Indence-National Hemophilia Foundation
212-328-3763 JINDENCE@hemophilia.org

Joint Statement on Addressing the MSM Blood Ban by Groups Representing People Living with Hemophilia, Gay Men and People Living with HIV/AIDS

The Department of Health & Human Services, Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability will be reviewing the current Food and Drug Administration (FDA) policy recommending that men who have sex with another man (MSM) even one time since 1977 should be deferred indefinitely from donating blood.

In the following joint letter advocacy organizations representing both the Gay & Lesbian Communities and the Plasma User Communities have signed on to demonstrate their past and ongoing ability to work together on issues surrounding the safety of our nation's blood and our public health.

“As the Department of Health and Human Services' Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability (ACBSA) prepares to evaluate the longstanding deferral of all men who have had sex with men (MSM) from donating blood, the organizations listed below wish to clarify a recently encountered misperception. Advocates invested in any change of such a policy report a perceived disconnect between the positions of leading gay rights and hemophilia representatives. We reject this notion.

The communities have more in common than current discourse reflects. Both gay men and people with hemophilia have been disproportionately impacted by the HIV epidemic. Critical advancements in HIV prevention, treatment, and research can be linked directly to the years of successful advocacy by both communities. For most of the past quarter century, these two communities have worked toward shared goals, including caring for people living with HIV and preventing the virus's spread.

The organizations listed below continue to share a strong commitment to the safety of our nation's blood supply and it is with this in mind that we urge the ACBSA to recommend any scientific research that is necessary to allow for the thoughtful consideration of alternative policies regarding donor deferral. We look forward to working with the Advisory Committee, and the broader federal government, to critically examine and evaluate alternative policies for MSM blood donors that maintain or enhance the safety of blood and blood products.”

AIDS Action Council

AmFAR

Committee of Ten Thousand

Gay Men's Health Crisis

Hemophilia Federation of America

Human Rights Campaign

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

National Hemophilia Foundation

World Federation of Hemophilia