



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

NOV 30 2007

Assistant Secretary for Health
Office of Public Health and Science
Washington D.C. 20201

Arthur W. Bracey, M.D.
Chair, Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability
1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 250
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Dr. Bracey:

Thank you for your letter reporting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability (ACBSA) at the August 2007 meeting. The issue of an adequate blood supply to ensure transfusion and transplantation safety is critical. Flexibility and elasticity of the blood supply has been described by the blood community as manageable.

I have forwarded the recommendations regarding the specific issues raised by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) directly to them. CMS appreciated the opportunity to question the Committee regarding blood use and the impact of changes to the Erythropoiesis Stimulating Agents (ESA) ruling.

The other recommendations related to the Nation's blood inventory system, including readiness to meet emergencies, are very important not only to the Office of Public Health and Science, but also to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response. As you are aware, we are implementing the Blood Availability and Safety Information System (BASIS). Currently we have 85 percent of the participation needed by hospitals and only 25 percent participation by blood centers to have a weighted predictor for the national impact. If the goal is to be able to look at Public Health Regions and states, the number of participating facilities will need to be increased. The Biomedical Advanced Development Research Authority's (BARDA) blood and tissue working group is also already implementing one of the recommendations for modeling in various disaster scenarios. I have forwarded these recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response.

Thank you again for your comments and recommendations related to the flexibility and elasticity of the blood supply in meeting the challenges of a key element of the health care infrastructure.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anand K. Parekh".

Anand K. Parekh, MD, MPH
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health
(Science and Medicine)