



e-Network Forum

CALIFORNIA BLOOD BANK SOCIETY

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Management of deferral during a computerized donor health history

A colleague affiliated with the American Red Cross wonders if those who use a **computerized health history form** would report what their center is currently doing when a reason for **deferral** is found? Is the donor required to complete the rest of the questionnaire or is the screening process terminated as soon as the first reason for deferral is documented? If the computer software can be configured to terminate the process when a reason for deferral is recorded, would it be more efficient to just terminate the process at that point?

The following responses have been received.

ADDENDA July 1, 2003

1. **A transfusion medicine physician in Mississippi** reports that his blood center uses an interactive, touch-screen system (**QDS, Talisman Ltd**). In this system, the **donor completes the interview before a staff person reviews responses on-screen**. The Mississippi colleague much prefers to have a **complete** data set on every donation. He does NOT want to terminate the interview at an initial deferrable response, because to do so would limit the number of questions asked of the donor, which **might result in the donor being deferred for less time than they would otherwise be deferred had all the donor eligibility questions been asked**. It is particularly important to know all the reasons for a donor's deferral, to avoid recruiting a donor back to the blood center too soon. If the donor is recruited back to the donor center too soon, the donor may be inconvenienced (and upset) when it is discovered that a longer or permanent deferrable history or behavior existed all along, at which time the newly discovered issue leads to another deferral. This wastes both the donor's and the donor center's time.
2. **A representative from United Blood Services** reports that they have been using a computerized interview process since November of 1999. The donor registration, eligibility, health history questions and vital signs are all documented in real time into the computer system. It is used at fixed sites and on mobiles. When a reason for deferral is found the response to the deferring question is entered into the system and **the interview is terminated**. According to the UBS representative, it is more efficient for the donor and for the collection staff to terminate the interview. The responding colleague reports having found that **many donors are not willing to stay** for the rest of the interview once they know they cannot donate.

ADDENDA July 7, 2003

3. **Editor's Comment:** FDA/CBER has just posted [recommendations](#) for computer-assisted donor history which may be of interest to this issue.

Please submit comments to the [e-Network Forum](#).

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Addenda: July 1 & 7, 2003

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