


# End of selection criteria based on sexual orientation

## *International Symposium* on alternatives to donation deferral

 April 20, 2023

 8.30 AM TO  
4.30 PM EST

 ONLINE

[Register here](#)



One-day symposium on the strategies to mitigate the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections following the removal of deferral criteria related to sexual orientation.

**Organising committee:** Mindy Goldman, Sheila O'Brien, Marc Germain, Christian Renaud, Gilles Lambert, Antoine Lewin.

## Objectives of the event

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- 1.** To favour knowledge transfer, this one-day symposium will invite experts from various countries to share strategies to mitigate the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections following the removal of deferral criteria related to sexual orientation. In particular, experts from countries which have moved to a gender-neutral, individualized risk assessment will share their experience, including the steps that were undertaken to document the impact of this paradigm shift. The similarities and differences in eligibility criteria across jurisdictions, and the rationales that were used to justify these criteria, will be highlighted.
- 2.** To support future recommendations and better align future research, the experts and stakeholders will be invited to discuss the impacts of various risk mitigation strategies on blood safety and costs, the impacts on the size of the donor pool, how these strategies are perceived by new donors, and how these changes have been monitored.
- 3.** To foster productive discussions, key stakeholders, including governmental partners, will be invited to share their views on the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections following the removal of deferral criteria related to sexual orientation and what challenges lie ahead.
- 4.** To shed light on other future or immediate needs regarding blood safety, key stakeholders will discuss measures implemented to mitigate the risks associated with pre- or post-exposure prophylaxis (oral or injectable among new eligible donors), post-implementation surveillance, and the potential use of pathogen reduction technologies to remove behavioural, individualized donor screening questions

## Funded by:

gbMSM Research Grant  
Program: Knowledge  
Mobilization Funding  
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## AGENDA

### Time (EST) Agenda Item

8:30 am

#### WELCOME SESSION

**Mindy Goldman and Marc Germain** – The history of blood and Goal of the symposium and history and experience of the gbMSM funding

9:00 am

#### SESSION 1: Strategies and subtleties in replacing the selection criteria based on sexual orientation worldwide

##### Moderator: Clive Seed

**Katy Davison** (NHSBT) – *Experience in the United Kingdom: Present and future orientations for individualizing behavioural deferral criteria*

**Thijs van de Laar** (Sanquin) – *Experience in the Netherlands: Present and future orientations for individualizing behavioural deferral criteria*

**Pierre Tiberghien** (Établissement Français du Sang) – *Experience in France: Present and future orientations for individualizing behavioural deferral criteria*

**Eilat Shinar** (MDA Blood Services Israel) – *Experience in Israel: Present and future orientations for individualizing behavioural deferral criteria*

11:00 am

#### DISCUSSION

11:15 am – 11:30 am – BREAK



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11:30 am

**SESSION 1: Strategies and subtleties in replacing the selection criteria based on sexual orientation worldwide** *(continued)*

**Moderator: Marc Germain**

**Antoine Lewin** (Héma-Québec) – *HIV residual risk in Canada for apheresis source plasma donation without deferral for men who have sex with men + Validation of new, gender-neutral questions on recent sexual behaviours among plasma donors and men who have sex with men*

**Sheila O'Brien** (Canadian Blood Services) – *Alternative to donor screening questions with time deferral for men who have sex with men: Potential impact on donor deferral and discomfort; – Removing the blood donation deferral for men who have sex with men: Informative risk models using Canadian public health surveillance data*

**Gilles Lambert** (INSPQ) – *HIV incidence and related risks among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver: Informing blood donor selection criteria in Canada*

**Stephen Field & Tor Hervig** (Irish Blood Transfusion Service) – *Experience in Ireland: Moving from a time-based deferral for gbMSM to other approaches to assess sexual risk behaviour*

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1:00 pm

**DISCUSSION**

**1:15 pm – 2:00 pm – LUNCH BREAK**



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## AGENDA

### Time (EST) Agenda Item

2:00 pm

**SESSION 2: Discussion on future orientation after removing the selection criteria based on sexual orientation**

**Moderator: Michael Busch**

**Darell Tan** (St. Micheal's Hospital) – *PEP/PreP: What it is and how it is used?*

**Philip J. Norris** (Vitalant Research Institute) – *PEP/PreP study in the US – Impact on donor detection and impact on blood safety*

**Steven Drews** (Canadian Blood Service) – *Anti-retroviral dosage in blood donors – Monitoring blood donor compliance*

2:30 pm

**DISCUSSION**

3:00 pm

**Moderator: Mindy Goldman**

**Marion Lanteri** (Creative Testing Solutions) – *Pathogen reduction technologies: Implementation, implications for donor screening, and next steps for removing behavioural, individualized questions*

**Eleonora Widmer** (CSL Behring) – *Removing behavioural, individualized donor screening questions: Compromise between making blood donation more inclusive and risks of lot contamination for source plasma*

**Marie-Pier Domingue** (Héma-Québec-UdeS) – *Residual risk of HIV, HBV, HVC and HAV for blood products intended for transfusion without gbMSM deferral, but using pathogen reduction technology: Can NAT tests be removed?*

3:30 pm

**DISCUSSION**

4:00 pm

**CLOSING REMARKS**

Mindy Goldman and Marc Germain