



## EBA Position on donor selection criteria for MSM

Donor selection criteria for men who have had sex with men (abbreviated as MSM) has been controversial in the recent past years. Temporary vs. permanent deferral periods according to EU Directive 2004/33/EC depend on a distinction between 'risk' and 'high risk'. Since the publication of EBA's MSM Deferral policy statement in the [EBA Book](#), the [Resolution CM/Res\(2013\)3](#) on sexual behaviours of blood donors that have an impact on transfusion safety has been unanimously adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (27 March 2013) and issued. The scientific basis for this resolution, established by a panel of renowned international experts after a 4-year work, has been published (Offergeld R et al. Vox Sang 2014, 107: 420–7). The main recommendations from both documents were as follows:

- *To “collect epidemiological data on the incidence and prevalence of sexually transmitted infections in the general population, in blood donors and among individuals with risky sexual behaviour, for use as a basis for decision making in donor-selection policy”*
- *To “encourage health authorities to support blood establishments by publically communicating the relationship between available data on the safety of the blood supply and subsequent decisions on donor-selection criteria”.*
- *“The balance between the protection of donors’ privacy and equal rights and the protection of the patient’s health has invariably to be in favour of the patient’s health.”*
- *“An increase in donor adherence to selection criteria is crucial for an effective donor selection and thus an increase in blood safety”.*
- *“An amendment of the current EU directive might be helpful”.*

The EBA supports the Council of Europe’s resolution and its scientific basis. It continues to keep the situation in Europe and around the globe under constant review.