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THE CONCEPT TO PROVISION OF SAFE BLOOD IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY: THE LAGOS STATE MODEL

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Background: Lagos State is one of the 36 States that make up the country Nigeria. It is located on the South Western part of Nigeria and has an estimated population of 15million inhabitants. It was the capital of Nigeria until 1991 when it was moved to Abuja. Lagos has however remained the nation's economic and commercial capital and according to extant political records Lagos is to Nigeria, what the head is to the body of an individual. The state is believed to be a socio-cultural melting pot attracting Nigerians from all tribes and ethnic groups as well as the foreigners. Due to the resolve of the state government to provide qualitative health care service to the people, it became imperative that the issue of safe blood be addressed. The competitions created by the various ministries in terms of financial needs made this a difficult task

Aims: 1. To standardize Blood Transfusion Practise in the state. 2. To provide safe blood for transfusion in the state through legislation

Methods: The concept was started in 1993 with a request for a law to be passed to regulate blood transfusion practice in the state since there was none nationally and the one at the state level was found to be faulty. This was necessary to enforce compliance. The issue of centralization of blood transfusion was then addressed with the use of two main centers located at two ends of the city. Government at this point provided two ELISA equipment at the centers and all pints of blood to be screened were sent to any of these centers. However there were numerous complaints of difficulty in assessing the center especially by those from other far away areas from the centers. There was also the issue of lack of funds by government in view of the many areas of need and the limited amount available. The situation and the will to ensure the provision of service led to the establishment of a Public Private Partnership arrangement to ensure the take off of the State Blood Transfusion Service.

Result: The signing into law of the Lagos State Blood Transfusion Policy in June 2004. The setting up of 6 Blood Screening Centers funded by private investors. The inauguration of Lagos State Blood Transfusion Committee to monitor, supervise, register and accredit blood transfusion practice in the state. The setting up and training of Monitors for the enforcement of the law.

Conclusion: The concept of ensuring that blood meant for transfusion are safe in a developing country goes beyond the ordinary and in fact calls for some unusual methods to be adopted in order to get a workable system. The need to solve the problem of lack of financial and material resources usually present and impediment to service provision except innovations such as Public Private Partnership (PPP) is employed.