

# ISBT WORKING PARTY ON RARE DONORS

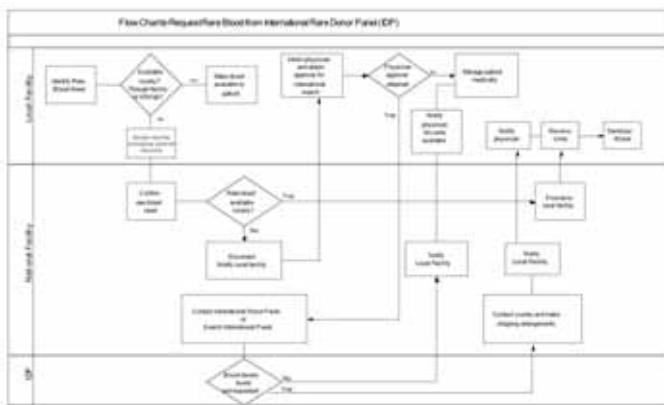
The ISBT Working Party on Rare Donors was formed in 1984 to promote international collaboration with regard to the provision of donor blood with rare phenotypes.

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1- to develop guidelines for standardization of listing, labeling, shipping, testing and reimbursement for rare donor blood;
- 2- to provide a centralized international web resource for providing ongoing information on matters related to rare donors;
- 3- to develop and extend the liaison with the International Blood Group Reference Laboratory (IBGRL in Bristol, UK) and thus assist blood services internationally to support and contribute to the WHO International Rare Donor Panel. ([http://www.isbt-web.org/members\\_only/society/working-parties.asp#rare](http://www.isbt-web.org/members_only/society/working-parties.asp#rare))

The working party is addressing the terms of reference to provide the following information, which is or will be posted on the ISBT website under the Working Party on Rare Donors section

To address Standardization, the first term of reference, a link ([http://www.isbt-web.org/members\\_only/files/society/working\\_rbd\\_updated\\_report.pdf](http://www.isbt-web.org/members_only/files/society/working_rbd_updated_report.pdf)) is provided to the Report of the ISBT Working Party on Rare Donors that gives background information to aid physicians who have an occasional need to transfuse rare products. The working party is developing a specific process flowchart to guide individuals seeking rare products, which refers to the second term of reference.



In addition, the working party has drafted recommendations of policies for the import of rare blood products to be considered for adoption by all member countries.

To address the third term of reference, the working party has developed a form ([http://www.isbtweb.org/members\\_only/files/society/working\\_Rare\\_Donor\\_Rare\\_Blood\\_Shipment\\_Form.pdf](http://www.isbtweb.org/members_only/files/society/working_Rare_Donor_Rare_Blood_Shipment_Form.pdf)) to be used in all international shipments to collect information regarding use of the products shipped. It will be the shipping facility's responsibility to place the form in the shipping box and the receiving facility's responsibility to complete the form. Each completed form should be faxed to the IBGRL as well as the shipping facility or if a centralized function, the country of origin (if desired). This will enable the use of the WHO International

Donor Panel to be monitored more effectively. The language of the international form is English and it is an option for each country to translate the form and use it domestically to track shipments of rare products. The form, translated into German, has been used in Germany since it was issued by the Working Party. In the first year, use of the form was voluntary. In order to collect information that can be used to improve the provision of products, use of the form will be mandatory for international shipments. **This was communicated previously via Transfusion Today and was sent to working party members with the minutes of the ISBT Working Party for Rare Donors meeting in South Africa in 2006.**

There are currently **118 facilities affiliated with the Rare Donor Programs across the world, (many of them have not only rare donor programs but also phenotyping programs for «common» antigens),** and effective communication between programs is critical to success. The time spent obtaining information about the location and making shipping arrangements for the rare blood must be minimized so that the shortest amount of time that passes between the request for transfusion and the blood being available. Thus, good communication is imperative.

The working party has regular formal meetings, which are held at each Biannual Scientific Congress of the ISBT. In addition, the working party organized programs on rare blood at the 2002, 2004, and 2006 ISBT Congresses. These educational programs have helped to raise the awareness of the wider transfusion medicine community about the availability of rare blood. The working party has also participated in **World Blood Donor Day** by presenting case studies in which it has been necessary to obtain blood via a rare donor panel.



*The close collaboration between working party members has been invaluable in maintaining and continually improving the process of rare blood provision, and making it more efficient.*