

Fact Sheet: Guidelines & SOP for Animal Blood Transfusion and Blood Banks in India

Q. Why are these guidelines needed?

India has the world's **largest livestock population (537 million)** and **over 125 million companion animals**. Yet, veterinary blood transfusion has so far remained **unstructured**, carried out mostly in emergencies without standardized donor screening, blood typing, or storage. This posed risks to animal safety, welfare, and veterinary confidence.

Q. What does this SOP aim to achieve?

The guidelines provide a **national framework** for safe, ethical, and scientifically sound transfusion practices. Key objectives include:

- Standardizing donor selection, blood collection, storage, and transfusion protocols
- Ensuring donor animal welfare and ethical safeguards
- Integrating **One Health principles** to reduce zoonotic risks
- Laying the foundation for a **national veterinary blood bank network**
- Supporting veterinary education, training, and research

Q. What are the key highlights?

- Establishment of **state-regulated veterinary blood banks** with biosafety standards
- **Mandatory blood typing and cross-matching** to prevent incompatibility
- **Donor eligibility norms** (age, weight, vaccination, disease screening, intervals)
- Ethical framework emphasizing **voluntary, non-remunerated donations** and informed consent
- SOPs for transfusion monitoring, adverse reaction management, and record-keeping
- Introduction of a **National Veterinary Blood Bank Network (N-VBBN)** with digital registries and real-time inventory

Q. Who will benefit?

- **Animals** – safer, life-saving transfusion support in emergencies and critical care
- **Veterinarians** – structured protocols and reference material for clinical practice
- **Farmers** – healthier livestock, reduced mortality, and protection of livelihoods
- **Society** – improved animal welfare and stronger food security

Q. What does the future look like?

The guidelines envision:

- **Mobile blood collection units** for rural and underserved areas
- **Cryopreservation & biobanking** for rare blood types
- **Mobile apps** for donor-recipient matching and inventory dashboards
- Expanded training for veterinarians and para-veterinarians
- Continued **research into advanced transfusion technologies**

Q. Are these legally binding?

No. The SOP is **advisory and non-statutory**, developed by DAHD to guide institutions and practitioners. It is a **dynamic document** that will evolve with new science, field experience, and stakeholder feedback.

In summary:

This first-of-its-kind national framework provides a **structured, ethical, and modern foundation** for animal blood transfusion and blood banking in India—saving animal lives, safeguarding farmer livelihoods, and advancing animal welfare.
