



ACT Government

2003-2004 BUDGET

NATIONAL BLOOD AGREEMENT

The ACT Government, along with the Commonwealth, State and Northern Territory Governments, has been involved in establishing a new National Blood Authority (NBA). The purpose of the NBA is to achieve a coordinated national approach to policy, governance and management of the Australian blood sector.

This national approach will ensure the highest quality of product and the most effective and efficient management of safety, distribution, funding and policy implementation.

Minister for Health, Simon Corbell, announced in the budget that the ACT was moving to finalising signing the Inter-Governmental National Blood Agreement (IGA). Legislation to establish the NBA has been passed by the Federal Parliament.

"This is a tremendous achievement, brought about by a great deal of co-operation between the Territories, States and Commonwealth," Mr Corbell said.

"Under this agreement, the ACT will retain all the blood and blood products we need and all existing safeguards will be in place to ensure a safe blood supply."

At present the ACT, like the other States and Territories, negotiates a contract annually with the national Australian Red Cross Blood Service (ARCBS) through their local business unit. In the past, the cost of blood has been shared between the States and Territories and the Commonwealth, with the Commonwealth paying approximately 42% of Australian Red Cross Blood Services (ARCBS) costs; 100% of the cost of Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (CSL) products and 50% of the cost of imported blood products. This meant that in total, the ACT paid approximately 28.6% of costs and the Commonwealth 71.4%.

Under the new National Blood Agreement, the amount to be paid will be based on the amount of blood used and will not be a fixed annual amount.

"As the consumption of blood and blood products in the ACT includes those used in the treatment of cross border patients, mostly from NSW, we are negotiating recovery mechanisms, alongside existing cross-border reimbursement arrangements for hospital treatment," Mr Corbell said.

The National Blood Authority (NBA) will be established as a statutory body under Commonwealth legislation to oversee the Australian blood supply. It will comprise a Board with an independent Chair and nominees from the private sector and the States, Territories and Commonwealth governments. The Board will ensure close consultative arrangements are established with providers of blood and blood product services, clinicians, professional groups and the community. It is anticipated that the NBA will commence operation on 1 July 2003



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Media Release

The establishment of the National Blood Agreement will have no impact this financial year. The National Blood Agreement will come into operation at the beginning of the 2003-04 financial year.

Statement ends.