



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS  
STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

April 8, 2015

Margaret A. Hamburg  
Food and Drug Administration Commissioner  
Consumer Affairs Branch  
Division of Communication and Consumer Affairs  
Office of Communication Outreach and Development  
Food and Drug Administration  
1401 Rockville Pike  
Suite 200N/HFM-47  
Rockville, MD 20852-1448  
Email: [ocod@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:ocod@fda.hhs.gov)

Dear Ms. Hamburg:

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) represents 115,900 members in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam, as well as internationally. I am writing to express support of your proposal to change the blood donor deferral period for men who have sex with men. As expressed in our letter to the committee in 2010, the AAFP supports standards that are based on sound scientific evidence. We are pleased that you are considering this evidence to modify your criteria for blood donation.

It is estimated that every two seconds someone in the United States requires a blood transfusion.<sup>1</sup> There is a critical need for blood donations to ensure that we can continue to meet this demand. The current standards excluding men who have ever had sexual contact with another man since 1977 is not scientifically justifiable and excludes a large population of potential donors.

We appreciate the opportunity to support you in this effort and encourage you to continue moving forward with this process. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Janet Leiker at [Jleiker@aafp.org](mailto:Jleiker@aafp.org) or (800) 274-2237, ext. 3161, and she will be happy to talk to you.

Sincerely,

*Reid Blackwelder MD*

Reid Blackwelder, MD, FAAFP  
Chair, Board of Directors

1. Blood eligibility guidelines. Retrieved from the American Red Cross website on March 20, 2015.  
<http://www.redcrossblood.org/learn-about-blood/blood-facts-and-statistics>

[www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)

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