

## **BLOOD TRANSFUSION SYSTEM IN GHANA GETS NEW PHASE**

Accra, May 15, GNA - Terumo BCT, a global leader in blood component, therapeutic apheresis and cellular technologies, has kick-started the implementation of the Mirasol Whole Blood (WB) System in Accra and Kumasi.

The Mirasol WB system which is the first in Africa and a collaborative project between Terumo Corporation and the Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) would better protect blood transfusion recipients.

Speaking at the launch in Accra, Dr Justina K. Ansah, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Blood Service, Ghana, said the Japanese technology would help in the prevention of transfusion transmitted infections and strengthen safe blood supply system in Ghana.

"Both Mirasol WB System and Hemovigilance programme are important initiatives in our continued drive to improving blood safety for the citizens of Ghana.

"I'm excited to see the direct results of this collaboration which will show the reduction of the risk of blood transfusions in Ghana after PRT implementation," she said.

Mr Kwaku Agyemang-Manu, the Minister of Health lauding the collaboration between JICA, Terumo BCT and the NBS Ghana in ensuring blood safety and availability, said the risk of transmission of malaria through blood transfusion could be significantly reduced, through the use of the Mirasol Technology.

He said the project, which was in response to a critical public health concern about the transmission and transfusion of malaria and other transmitted pathogens was timely.

"The partnership between JICA and Terumo BCT and Terumo Corporation to assist the NBS Ghana to reduce TTIs, using Mirasol WB system and start a Hemovigilance programme is highly commendable and appreciated," he said.

He therefore assured of the Ministry's support to all healthy partnerships that would ensure that services were adequately resourced with the requisite personnel and logistics that would ensure efficiency in healthcare delivery.

Mr Hirofumi Hoshi, the Chief Representative of JICA said: "We are proud of this collaborative global effort to directly address the safety of the blood supply in Ghana."

"We look forward to installing Mirasol WB systems and helping the blood centre staff implement these in their daily efforts to supply their community with safer transfusions."

Mr Kaoru Yoshimura, the Japanese Ambassador to Ghana, emphasised that the partnership showed the continuous support the Japanese people and organisations had given the medical fraternity in Ghana and Africa over the centuries.

"I believe that once this JICA-Terumo project is completed, the partner hospitals and institutes will serve its full purpose in Ghana, Africa and even beyond," he said.

Mr Yoshimura noted that the project would create better circumstances to introduce Japan's high quality medical equipment through commercial bases.

Mr Sylvester J.K Parkar-Allotey, Ghana's Ambassador to Japan, said the Mirasol Technology that was provided last year to the Okomfo Anokye and the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospitals would reduce cost and risks at facilities.

He however called for the training of health workers and technicians on the proper handling and storage of blood effectively.

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