

China embraces a whole new dimension in blood safety

Blood safety is a serious concern for countries worldwide and China is no exception to this. For many years commercial blood donation has been prohibited in China, and the Government has adopted a systematic approach to continually improving blood quality, from the initial donation through to collection, transportation, screening and finally, transfusion in a hospital.

The Chinese Society of Blood Transfusion has a long association with Tecan, beginning in the early 1990s. Since the installation of China's first modern liquid handling workstation at the Kunming Blood Center in Yunnan province, there has been close collaboration between the professional staff of the Society and Tecan, in a bid to steadily improve both the capabilities and the quality of blood screening services.

In addition to bringing the benefits of the latest instrumentation and automation to the Society, Tecan is keen to share its expertise and knowledge of quality control and quality assurance with the laboratories based at the Chinese blood centers and blood banks. In 2007, Günter Weisshaar, Senior Vice President of Tecan and Head of Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs, was invited to speak at the Annual Conference of the 16 blood centers and blood banks within Yunnan province, and gave a presentation on establishing a quality control system according to international quality standards. Günter has continued to address the conference every year since and, in 2011, was again invited to speak at this forum, raising the quality standard of the local blood screening facilities to new heights when he introduced the concept of enterprise risk management and its impact on blood safety assurance. Enterprise risk management systems ensure that blood centers and blood banks are prepared for any unexpected disaster that could lead to a breakdown in their ability to process blood. Using all the knowledge and experience gained by Tecan during the implementation of its own enterprise risk management system, Günter systematically described the framework, methodology and documentation required. The clear goal was to advise delegates on



Günter Weisshaar presenting on enterprise risk management

the possible risks and how they could be identified, evaluated and mitigated.

The presentation triggered a tremendous discussion among the delegates at the conference. In many cases it was not the first time they had heard about risk management, but being shown a systematic and comprehensive approach was clearly quite enlightening and some delegates were motivated to express an interest in implementing their own scheme, requesting Tecan's advice and assistance. Tonghan Yang, Director of the Kunming Blood Center, commented: "As our standard operating procedures and quality control systems mature, the focus of our attention to further improve blood safety is now shifting to risk management, and Tecan's presentation was both timely and very helpful. We are determined to continuously build on our

capabilities and are planning to initiate a risk management scheme at the Kunming Blood Center early in 2012. Tecan's helping hand to guide us through this journey will be greatly appreciated."



Mrs Pu Yang, Director of Hong He Gu blood bank, expresses an interest in implementing an enterprise risk management scheme in her organization