

FACT SHEET

Supply of Blood and Blood Related Products for use by Australian Residents Temporarily Overseas

Introduction

This Fact Sheet provides information on the procedure for application for supply of blood and blood related products for use by Australian residents temporarily overseas.

Going overseas?

Supply of blood or blood related products under the subsidised arrangements managed by the NBA may be available (depending on availability of product and suitable supply arrangements) for travel overseas for up to 12 months. A patient will only be approved a total period of supply less than or equal to 12 months in any rolling 24 month period. Products will only be supplied where there is confirmation of effective supervision of use by an Australian clinician.

This policy does not provide for the payment of costs associated with the provision of product such as storage, import/export approvals, insurance, indemnity and shipment. Patients are liable for these costs directly.

The reasons why an Australian resident may require blood products while overseas are varied. Generally, travel falls into the following categories:

- (a) overseas holidays;
- (b) visiting relatives and/or friends overseas;
- (c) participation by the Australian resident (or family member of the resident) in overseas educational courses/research; and
- (d) the Australian resident (or family member of the Resident) undertakes an employment contract or posting overseas.

How to apply for supply of blood or blood related products for use overseas

In order to apply for approval for the supply of blood or blood related products for use overseas, the Australian resident must submit an application to the National Blood Authority (NBA):

- on the appropriate Application Form “Request for approval of supply of blood or blood products for use overseas”; and
- at least three months prior to the date of travel (exceptions may be allowed at the discretion of the NBA in emergency circumstances).

The application must include all of the information requested in the application form. Among other items, the form requires the Australian resident seeking supply of blood or blood related products to (where possible):

1. provide all personal details, including full name, address in Australia, date of birth, birth certificate or proof of Australian Citizenship, passport details, etc;
2. explain the reason for travelling overseas and date of intended return to Australia;
3. advise proposed address in the country of destination;
4. request the treating clinician in Australia to complete the "Australian treating clinician approval form" confirming the name of the blood or blood related product to be supplied and the treatment regime; and
5. provide a signed declaration by the Australian resident applying for supply of the blood product for use overseas that he/she will:
 - (a) abide by his/her responsibilities in relation to the transport, storage, export and reimportation requirements if required for the blood or blood related product;
 - (b) register updated details with the Australian Embassy/High Commission or representative Consulate in the destination country; and
 - (b) advise the NBA immediately of any changed circumstances during the period of absence regarding:
 - (i) address in Australia;
 - (ii) address and contact details in destination country;
 - (iii) treatment regime or treating clinician in destination country or Australia;
 - (iv) medical condition; and
 - (v) any other materially changed circumstance.

All information requested on the application form must be substantiated (where possible) with the following information:

- (a) proof of visa status in the country of destination (eg copy (witnessed by a person with authority to witness a formal document in Australia) of personal details page in passport and visa stamp in passport);
- (b) proof of return travel to Australia (eg copy of airline tickets/official airline itinerary);
- (c) where the stay overseas is due to study or an employment contract, a declaration in writing from the educational institution/employer confirming the nature and length of the requirement to stay in the destination country.

Extension to supply in exceptional circumstances only

The normal period of supply of a blood or blood related product for use by an Australian resident temporarily overseas is limited to 12 months from the date of travel. Only in exceptional circumstances which prevent a return to Australia on the intended date (for example hospitalisation) will a further supply (for a limited period and up to a maximum of 3 months only) be granted.

Applications for an extension to supply for exceptional circumstances will be evaluated by the NBA on a case by case basis.

Substantiation of Exceptional Circumstances

An Australian Resident seeking an exceptional extension to the initial 12 month approval of supply of blood or blood products for use overseas is responsible for the submission of an application to the NBA on the appropriate Application Form "Request for extension of supply of blood or blood products for use overseas".

The application for extension must include all of the information requested in the application form and the Australian resident making the application should attach all requested substantiation documentation.