



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
ISLAMABAD HEALTHCARE REGULATORY
AUTHORITY (IHRA)



Press Release

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**ISLAMABAD HEALTHCARE REGULATORY AUTHORITY (IHRA) SEALS A PRIVATE
BLOOD BANK IN ISLAMABAD WITH GRAVE VIOLATIONS**

Islamabad, [October 6, 2023] – In a shocking revelation, the Islamabad Healthcare regulatory Authority (IHRA) uncovered severe violations at Ahmed Blood Bank in PWD, Islamabad, during an inspection.

Previously, the Authority visited this blood bank on **03-08-2023**, The inspection revealed a complete absence of qualified technical personnel at the time, with Mr. Shahbaz Masih identified as the sole operator of the blood bank. Disturbingly, RCC and platelets were being separated, and whole blood issued upon request without adherence to standard protocols.

Critical concerns emerged regarding storage practices, as blood bags were found stored in a domestic refrigerator lacking temperature control. Moreover, a substantial number of blood bags were casually placed on benchtops/counters, posing a serious risk to the integrity of the blood supply.

Platelets, requiring specific storage conditions, were shockingly found in a domestic refrigerator instead of the mandated 22°C. The reuse of blood bags, observed through washed and seemingly repurposed bags, raised significant health and safety concerns.

In response to these grave blood banking violations, the authority issued a directive to cease all blood banking services immediately. Additionally, the blood bank was instructed to apply for registration with the Islamabad Healthcare Regulation Authority (IHRA) within 10 working days. Non-compliance would result in strict actions being taken against the HCE.

Yesterday **05-10-23**, IHRA team revisited Ahmed Blood Bank following a registration request. Astonishingly, the blood bank was found to be operational, blatantly disregarding IHRA previous directives. The CEO/In-charge/owner, Mr. Shahbaz Masih, was present on-site.

Further investigations revealed expired blood bags in the refrigerator, tempered expiry dates on Gel Cards, and expired reagents also found in the HCE. Disturbingly, critical screening tests for diseases such as Hepatitis B & C, HIV, Syphilis, and Malaria were not being conducted for blood bags. Cross-matching and grouping procedures were observed to be improperly executed, putting patients at serious risk.

Even more alarming was reports of expired and substandard blood bags being given to patients after altering collection and expiry dates. Quality control measures, including the washing and refilling of used bags without proper checks, were found to be routine practices.



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A Visible microbial growth was detected in Platelets bags (a crucial blood component), raising serious concerns about contamination risks. During the investigation, it was revealed that 17 blood bags were stored in the refrigerator, with 02 of them found to be expired. Additionally, a hidden stash of 15 blood bags, either expired or substandard, was discovered concealed in a cabinet, emphasizing the blood bank's blatant disregard for regulations."

Blood grouping was shockingly performed using urine sample containers, a practice entirely inconsistent with standard medical procedures. Furthermore, no qualified Hematologist or Medical Officer was available during the visit.

As a consequence of these grievous violations, the Ahmed Blood Bank has been sealed by the IHRA, pending further investigations. The severity of these breaches raises questions about the safety and integrity of the blood supply. IHRA is committed to taking swift and decisive action against all blood banks in Islamabad found to be below the defined standards of care.