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Review of literature

Determinants of plasma donation: A review of the literature

Déterminants du don de plasma : revue de la littérature

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Abstract

The major contribution of Human Sciences in the understanding of the whole blood donation behavior has been through the study of individuals' motivations and deterrents to donate. However, if whole blood donation has been very widely studied in the last sixty years, we still know very little about plasma donation in voluntary non-remunerated environments. Yet, the need for plasma-derived products has been strongly increasing for some years, and blood collection agencies have to adapt if they want to meet this demand. This article aims to review the main motivations and deterrents to whole blood donation, and to compare them with those that we already know concerning plasma donation. Current evidence shows similarities between both behaviors, but also differences that indicate a need for further research regarding plasma donation.

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Keywords: Blood donation; Plasma donation; Motivations and deterrents

Résumé

L'apport majeur des sciences humaines pour la compréhension du don de sang total se fait à travers l'étude des motivations et freins à donner des individus. Si le don de sang total a été très largement étudié depuis plus de 60 ans, nous en savons pour le moment très peu sur le don de plasma dans un système volontaire et non rémunéré. Or, les besoins en produits dérivés du plasma sont en forte hausse ces dernières années, et les centres de collecte doivent s'adapter pour répondre à la demande. Cet article a pour objectif de rappeler les principaux motivateurs et freins au don de sang total, et de les mettre en comparaison avec ceux dont nous avons connaissance pour le don de plasma. Les données dont nous disposons à l'heure actuelle montrent des similitudes entre les deux comportements, mais aussi des différences soulignant la nécessité d'autres études sur le don de plasma.

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Mots clés : Don de sang ; Don de plasma ; Motivations et freins

1. Introduction

The major contribution of human sciences in the understanding of whole blood donation has been through the study of individual's motivations and deterrents to donate. Research in social psychology are numerous, from the study of the determinants of donation, to the development of persuasive communication strategies, as well as learning how to deal

with people whose donation is being deferred [1]. The aim is to understand donors as well as non-donors, and to convert this knowledge into strategies that Blood Collection Agencies (BCAs) can apply. Worldwide, many researchers studied whole blood donation, and a meta-analysis [2] compiled 49 studies, for a total of 154,122 participants, in order to list the main determinants of whole blood donation worldwide.

Thus, major motivations of blood donors, new or regular, appear related to the prosocial nature of donation (i.e. altruism, communitarianism...), to personal values (i.e. moral norms), and to the comfort of the donation environment. A recent Aus-

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tralian study [3] confirmed the results found by Bednall and Bove (2011) [2], and also recalled the importance of personal gain as a motivation for the first donation (going from personal satisfaction to taking of a little time on their work hours).

Regarding deterrents to donation, donors and non-donors mention most of the time a weak self-efficacy [4] feeling (i.e. belief to be able, or not, to successfully perform a behavior), show little engagement justified by a lack of promotional communication, and mention a lack of knowledge about donation (process, needs, what exactly is collected. . .). Some donors also mention negative experiences with staff, and anxiety related to blood collection.

2. Determinants of plasma donation in a voluntary, non-remunerated system

These last years have been marked by an important worldwide increase of the need for plasma-derived products [5]. To successfully meet the demand, some BCAs practicing voluntary non-remunerated donations are turning toward human sciences to study the determinants of plasma donation and develop new strategies to recruit and retain plasmapheresis donors. Unlike whole blood donation, voluntary non-remunerated plasma donation has not really been studied, and even though it is possible to find studies on the matter that go back to more than 40 years [6], it has only been a few years since studies really started [7–15].

3. Motivations and deterrents to plasma donation

In 2011, Bove et al. [9] studied reasons to perform a first plasma donation, and to continue to donate among Australian donors. In total, 103 plasma donors were divided into 11 focus-groups to talk about their motivations and deterrents for plasma donation. The most important trigger of conversion from whole blood donation to plasma donation was by far requests from BCAs staff. The most frequently attributed advantages to plasma donation compared to whole blood donation were: the development of interactions with the BCAs staff; the higher frequency of donation facilitating the establishment of a routine; plasma donation being less tiring than whole blood donation; and the needs for plasma perceived as important. Also, a study [16] showed that the donation environment plays a role in donor's intention to come back for another donation. Thus, BCAs and staff's conviviality appears to be a major lever of the donor's engagement, as well as the ability to establish a routine, and to interact with the staff. Most commonly mentioned deterrents were: the time required for a plasma donation; the needle being more painful (because of the duration of the donation); and some donors have a feeling that the increased donation frequency goes with higher expectancies from BCAs, which seems to convey an implicit pressure on those donors. In short, plasma donors generally donate because they are asked to, donation frequency facilitates the establishment of a routine and the longer donation time enables more interactions with the staff, making the process more pleasant. However, it is harder to find time to donate, and if the increased frequency is perceived as a motivation by some

donors, others perceive it on the contrary as a deterrent because of a pressure to donate more often.

In France, research on plasma donation started with a qualitative study [12] among regular plasma donors. The aim was to understand the reasons of their engagement by the dimensions of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [17]. In this theory perceived behavioral control (i.e. the perception of internal and external resources available to perform the behavior), attitude (i.e. positive or negative evaluation of an object), and subjective norms (i.e. perceived social pressure by peers to perform the behavior) are predictors of behavioral intention, which predicts the realization of the behavior. The authors interviewed 16 plasma donors based on these dimensions: prevalence of the norm in behavioral intention was measured, as well as perceived behavioral control and attitude towards donation. Most of the donors indicated that they first donated blood at 18 years old (68.8%), and among those donors, at least one of their parents was a donor (62.5%). The main trigger for plasma donation was for most of them an explicit request from the National French Blood Institute (81%). In accordance with the study of Bove et al. (2011) [9], the major deterrent was the time required for plasma donation (62%), and the will to help someone was an important motivation (75%), as the feeling that they performed a good deed (50%). However, even though they admit to a certain satisfaction, 94% of the participants declared that they were not looking for any kind of recognition. Finally, the only difference perceived by these donors between blood and plasma donation was the time required (87%). Exception made of this deterrent; results were not quite similar to those obtained by Bove et al. (2011) [9]. However, this is not strictly the same profile of donors, and results of the study of Delépine and colleagues [12] should be interpreted with precaution given the small number of participants ($n = 16$).

In 2013, Bagot et al. [7] studied Australian blood donors. Specifically, three different populations of blood donors were studied: those who refused to convert to plasmapheresis; those who accepted to convert to plasmapheresis before they came back to whole blood donation; and those who accepted to convert to plasmapheresis, then completely stopped to donate. They were asked about deterrents to plasma donations, and results were different depending on the donor's category.

The most important deterrents for donors refusing to convert was the time required (56%); followed at 42% by the feeling that expectancies would be too high; the lack of knowledge about the donation (33%); difficulties to take an appointment and fear of contamination when the red cells are being returned (25%).

Among donors who converted to plasma donation before they came back to whole blood donation, the time required was also the most important deterrent for 41%; followed by the impact of plasma donation on their well-being and the amount of paperwork before the donation that was too important (37%); the perceived expectancies of BCAs (33%); and eligibility criteria being too strict compared to whole blood donation (30%).

For donors who converted and then completely stopped donations, the deterrents were: the amount of paperwork before a donation (63%); followed by difficulties to take an appointment, being too busy, donation not being a priority anymore, and

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