



## **GLOBAL HEALING MODERN MEDICINE FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **REPORTS DESCRIBE GAPS IN ACCESS TO SAFE BLOOD WORLDWIDE**

**BERKELEY**, Calif., May 2, 2018 – The publication this week of two articles in *Transfusion*, the journal of the American Association of Blood Banks, spotlights the important work being done by NGO Global Healing and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to help low and middle income countries achieve sustainable access to safe blood at a time when 80% of the world’s population has access to only 20% of the world’s blood supply.

The articles summarize findings from two conferences held in the Washington, DC area last spring, one hosted by Global Healing in collaboration with America's Blood Centers, and the other by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health.

The conference held by Global Healing concentrated on exploring ways to increase access to affordable, safe blood for low- and lower-middle-income countries. The WHO estimates that a million lives are lost each year due to lack of access to blood transfusions. In particular, the major question discussed was how national blood systems in these countries could become sustainable without external financial support. “The US Government was a major source of support to fill this gap, but as this funding comes to an end new sources are needed to prevent more unnecessary loss of lives,” said Dr. John Donnelly, President of Global Healing. As a result, the [Global Healing report](#) identifies key strategies to help make blood systems in developing countries economically sustainable. The report describes the need for blood systems to build quality programs, based on accepted standards, including hospitals, clinics,

and rural health care providers to ensure proper, safe use of blood. Proposals to resolve global health care inequities must include helping developing countries define sustainable policies and practices for blood availability and utilization within the local contexts.

The NHLBI conference focused on identifying research priorities that if addressed over the next 5-10 years would help identify implementable and sustainable strategies that would increase blood availability and transfusion safety in low- and middle-income countries. The resulting conference [report](#) details research priorities for effectiveness and implementation research designed to test strategies to make developing country blood systems work better and be sustainable without outside support.

According to Dr. Brian Custer, who is the Director of Epidemiology and Policy Science at Blood Systems Research Institute (BSRI) San Francisco and Vice President of Research and Scientific Affairs at Blood Systems, and served as the chair for the NHLBI workshop and lead author of the NHLBI report, “A mixed approach of needs assessment and targeted interventions with sufficient evidence base to move toward sustainment is an appropriate next step for blood availability and transfusion safety research in low and middle income countries.”

### **About Global Healing**

[Global Healing](#) is a Berkeley-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to building a world where all children and mothers with life-threatening conditions are cared for by local, skilled healthcare professionals. Global Healing trains physicians, nurses, and medical laboratory professionals in lower income countries to implement current best practices for improved patient care. Global Healing currently has active [programs](#) in Haiti, Honduras, the Republic of Georgia, and Vietnam. More information can be found at [www.globalhealing.org](http://www.globalhealing.org).

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