

Recognizing the critical need for traceability and transparency for cells, organs and tissues for transplantation – the WHO and ICCBBA convened a two day workshop. Dr Luc Noel of the WHO says, “We now have a clear view of the way forward, building on the success of the widespread implementation of ISBT 128 global coding standard for blood and cell therapy programmes”

Successful outcomes from donation and transplantation of human organs, cells and tissues are vital to patients in need of life saving or life enhancing transplants. Emerging opportunities for the use of different types of cells, tissues and organs have already created new complexities and risks, including global circulation of many types of tissues and cells, particularly bone and haematopoietic stem cells. This international movement of altruistic donations underlines the requirement for a harmonized approach to nomenclature and traceability so that donors and transplant recipients can be protected from unsafe practices, unpredictable disease transmission risks and unethical procedures through rapid tracking followed by corrective and preventive action.

In 2010, the World Health Assembly encouraged the implementation of globally consistent coding systems for human cells, tissues and organs to facilitate national and international traceability of materials of human origin for transplantation.

Responding to this critical need for traceability and transparency for cells, organs and tissues for transplantation, and recognizing the benefits and successes of widespread implementation of ISBT 128 global coding standard for blood and cell therapy programmes, WHO and ICCBBA convened a workshop (30-31 August 2012) to examine the implications of extending this coding system to meet future global needs. The international experts attending the meeting developed a clear view of the way forward, building on the success of the widespread implementation of the ISBT 128 global coding standard for blood and cell therapy programmes. It was concluded that great benefits in terms of safety and transparency would be achieved by working to implement this standard also for organs and tissues. Under the leadership of the WHO, professional societies, regulators and governments should work to implement this well recognised and accepted standard for the benefit of transplant patients worldwide.