

Extracts from:

EDITORIAL

The “crisis” of blood donation . . . science

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In this issue of **TRANSFUSION**, four articles contribute to the “body of science” of blood donors and blood collection.

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A final study by Katz and coworkers⁷ evaluates an intervention designed to increase safety, staff efficiency, and donor satisfaction using touch-screen computer-assisted self-interviewing (CASI) for donor health histories. Although not a randomized trial and limited by its use of historical controls at their site for comparative purposes, this study represents an exemplary attempt to approach the use of an intervention from a scientific perspective. Feasibility and preliminary data were obtained through an initial pilot study, and the larger study identified specific measurable outcomes and an analytic plan. Such design characteristics would be routine in clinical trials or biomedical research, but have been typically absent from blood donation “science” for decades. Of note, this study’s use of actual donors engaged in CASI was able to refute earlier publications cautioning that CASI implementation could result in loss of safe donors.⁸ The previous survey reporting these conclusions used respondents who had never actually engaged in CASI. The ability to elucidate differences between real and projected behaviors is essential in any scientific field.

7. Katz LM, Cumming PD, Wallace EL, Abrams PS. Audiovisual touch-screen computer-assisted self-interviewing for donor health histories: results from two years experience with the system. *Transfusion* 2005;45:171-180.

8. Sanchez Am Schreiber GB, Glynn SA, Bethel J, et al. Blood donor perceptions of health history screening with a computer-assisted self-administered interview. *Transfusion* 2003;43:165-72.