



Australian Government
Department of Health

Deputy Secretary

Apolline Kohen
Acting Committee Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Kohen

I am writing in relation to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, Estimates hearing on 1 June 2021.

I wish to clarify evidence provided to the Committee during its examination of the Department of Health (pages 54-55 of the Proof Hansard refer).

In answering a question from Senator Rice discussed blood donor deferral policies with me. During the discussions, Senator Rice made the following statement:

Senator RICE: A trans woman married to a man can't donate blood. The man she is married to can donate blood.

There was further discussion around transgender donor deferral policies in Australia. My response was based on the assumption that the Senator's assertion was factual.

However, in light of subsequent review I wish to clarify that Senator Rice's statement above is not correct, and suggests there may have been some misunderstanding of the Australian Lifeblood donor deferral criteria.

Lifeblood have confirmed to the TGA that in the scenario described by Senator Rice, regardless of whether the transgender donor is male or female, and whether their male partner is cisgender or transgender, both would be subject to a 3-month deferral period after their last sexual contact.

We would be most grateful if you could advise Senator Rice of the current criteria for blood donors.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Skerritt', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Adj. Professor John Skerritt
Health Products Regulation Group

10 June 2021