

Supporting Our Brothers With Their Stand on Blood: Checklist

Contacting the HLC

Have I checked the latest HLC contact information on jw.org?

HLC contact information should be carried by elders at *all* times. It is recommended that you enter HLC contact details on your mobile phone, perhaps prefixed with “HLC-” for ease of finding.

Am I aware of all the occasions when I should contact the HLC?

Check the *When to Contact the HLC* page of this document. The HLC can provide *Care Plans* and other information to assist. Early contact can prevent emergencies.

Am I aware of all the information I need to pass on to the HLC?

The following information will help the HLC to effectively deal with cases: the publisher’s full name, age, and contact information. Is there an up-to-date *AD* document? What is the specific medical condition? What is the spiritual standing of the publisher, and are any relatives supportive? Which hospital is involved, and the doctor’s name if possible.

Advance Decision (AD) document

Has each member of my Field Service Group, including me, completed an AD document?

You should confirm with each member of your group that they have a signed, witnessed and dated *AD* document, less than 5 years old. It is helpful to review the completeness and legibility of the document to ensure no mistakes have been made.

Have several copies of the AD document been made, and copies lodged with the appropriate people?

For each member of your group, check that copies have been lodged with the witnesses of the *AD* document, the emergency contact, the publisher’s GP, and the congregation secretary.

This may prove critical in helping to establish the views of a publisher who is unconscious in hospital, and whose *AD* document cannot be found.

Do family members of older publishers have copies of the AD document (including any resident in care facilities)?

Family members should keep copies of elderly publishers’ *AD* documents, including previous *AD* documents too. This can help establish the long-held view of publishers who may now be deemed by clinicians as mentally incompetent.

If there is no immediate family in the truth, group overseers should accept this responsibility of keeping older *AD* documents, as well as ensuring such are lodged with the congregation secretary.

For languages other than English: Have I explained to all in my group the importance of carrying the English AD document?

It is the *English* version of the *AD* document that has legal validity in this country, even if the equivalent of the *AD* document is available in your own language. See April 17, 2015, letter to all bodies of elders.

General Awareness

Am I aware of the available articles to help others make an informed decision on the issue of blood?

The *November 2006 Our Kingdom Ministry* insert; *June 15, 2004 Watchtower* p.19-24, 29-31; *October 15, 2000 Watchtower, Questions from Readers*; *Keep Yourself in God’s Love*, p.215-218; *Instructions for Filling in the Advance Decision Document (dpai)*.

Have I reviewed the latest letter dated May 2nd this year?

This will ensure that you are following the latest guidelines in cooperating with HLCs, and will enable you to give the best possible support to our brothers and sisters.

When to Contact the HLC

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Emergencies

Emergency hospital admissions where surgery is being contemplated. Road traffic accidents and other traumatic injuries requiring hospital admission. In emergencies, you may give the publisher HLC contact details, so they can make direct contact with the HLC to avoid any delay.

Surgery

As soon as you become aware that a publisher will be undergoing surgery. Do not wait until there is a definite date for surgery to contact the HLC. Most types of major surgery can potentially involve the blood issue, even if the surgeon has indicated there is no issue. When appropriate, the HLC may send a *Care Plan for Surgery* which can empower the publisher to take greater charge of their treatment.

Pregnancies

As soon as you become aware that a sister is pregnant. The HLC will send an information pack including the *Care Plan for Women in Labour*, as well as additional information for the requesting elder. Pregnancies can prove to be particularly dangerous for our sisters when complications arise. The information pack helps parents and the hospital team to be prepared.

Cancers

Even if surgery is not being considered, as soon as you are aware that a publisher has been diagnosed with cancer. Chemotherapy can often cause anaemia and other blood-related issues. The HLC may send the publisher a specialist *Care Plan* document.

Feedback

Feedback about a publisher's experience in hospital and co-operation (or otherwise) of the doctors regarding the blood issue. The HLC maintain a register of co-operative doctors, so this feedback can be very useful.

Considerations

Remain Alert

The sooner the HLC know about a case that could potentially involve the blood issue, the better. **Please do not wait until there is a problem. Early contact can prevent emergencies. If in doubt, please contact the HLC.** It is the course of wisdom for publishers to be as prepared and informed as possible (Prov. 22:3), and early contact with the HLC can help to ensure this. Be particularly alert to cases involving children, or cases involving older ones - transfusions are more commonly advised in patients over the age of 60.

For Who?

Elders may contact the HLC on behalf of any publisher (baptised or unbaptised), or their children. First contact with the HLC should always be via an elder, except in the case of an emergency, when elders may give the publisher HLC contact details.

Details Required

When contacting the HLC on behalf of a publisher, please provide the following information:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publisher name and age | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is there an up-to-date <i>AD</i> document? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publisher contact information | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are relatives (if any) supportive? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical condition/situation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spiritual standing of publisher |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital and doctor if known | |