Beat: Lifestyle

FRANCE WILL LIFT A BAN ON GAY MEN DONATAING BLOOD, INTRODUCED IN THE 1980S

TO END A MORE THAN 30-YEAR-OLD LAW

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USPA NEWS - France has decided to end a more than 30-year-old law that banned gay men from donating blood, a measure originally put in place to stop the spread of diseases such as HIV. Health Minister Marisol Touraine said beginning in the spring of 2016, no blood donors can be refused...

France has decided to end a more than 30-year-old law that banned gay men from donating blood, a measure originally put in place to stop the spread of diseases such as HIV. Health Minister Marisol Touraine said beginning in the spring of 2016, no blood donors can be refused based on their sexual orientation. She spoke at a meeting in the Health Ministry on Wednesday after experts studied the issue.

Men, who will not have had any sexual relation or who had some but with only one man in the past four months, will be allowed to donate their blood, the French health ministry said.

The policy shift comes after a European Court of Justice ruling in April found that government bans must follow strict conditions. Many governments had imposed lifetime bans on gay men because they are more likely than other groups to have HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

In May, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration proposed ending its lifetime ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men, a 32-year-old policy that many experts say is no longer justified. Under the proposal, the current ban on donations from gay men would be replaced with a policy barring donations from men who have had sex with another man in the last year. (USnews)

France has the highest rate of HIV among gay men in Europe. Half of those newly infected with HIV between 2003 and 2008 were men who had sex with other men, according to the Luxembourg-based Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ)....The court ruled in April that banning homosexual men from giving blood may be justified where strictly necessary and only if there are no alternatives for preventing the transmission of severe infectious diseases. (Reuters)

At present in England, Scotland and Wales, men who have sex with men (MSM) are banned from giving blood unless they abstain from sex for 12 months...The ban also affects many women who are married to bisexual men “ “ as the ban also prevents women who have slept with MSM from giving blood.... Until 2011, MSM were permanently banned from giving blood across the UK “ “ but the system was changed in England, Scotland and Wales. (PinkNews)

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