

# Red Cross blood safety under scrutiny

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The American Red Cross received reports that 134 people, including one who died, got hepatitis B after blood transfusions, but the organization did not investigate them because of internal policies that violate government safety rules, federal regulators say.

In one case, an Ohio Red Cross chapter challenged the policies and eventually uncovered two additional patients

who got the dangerous liver infection after transfusions that came from the same blood donor.

The evidence got that donor kicked off the Red Cross blood donor list, government records show.

They are the latest in a series of revelations about safety violations that have plagued the Red Cross for more than 10 years.

The Food and Drug Admin-

istration, which uncovered the hepatitis infections in an inspection of Red Cross headquarters, is pushing the organization to find out if bad blood caused the rest of the infections.

The Red Cross has not had a blood program in South Florida for more than five years.

The consumer advocacy group Public Citizen is urging a congressional investigation of Red Cross problems.

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