Abstract:

OBJECTIVE: Private umbilical cord blood (UCB) banking after delivery has increased over the last decade. For adult/somatic stem cell research UCB is an essential source of stem cells and researchers question if the number of UCB samples for research might be reduced by private banking.

METHODS: A survey among seven private blood banks in Germany and analysis and comparison of the number of UCB samples donated for research within the STEMMAT project with private blood banking were performed from 03/2003 to 06/2005 at the Frauenklinik (OB/GYN), Technical University Munich, Germany.

RESULTS: Within 27.5 months 1,551 UCB samples were collected for research purposes; the effective recruitment rate was higher than expectations at an effective 66.2 %. Private UCB banking \([n = 24]\) was distributed among three cord blood banks \([n = 16, 6 \text{ and } 4]\). The rate of private blood banking was 0.99 \% for all deliveries, thus reducing the effective rate for research purpose by only 1.5 \%. CONCLUSION: Under the assumption of active and successful recruitment of scientific UCB samples, private blood banking does not significantly reduce this rate and therefore is a negligible rival in the competition for sufficient numbers of UCB samples for research.