



Summary of discussion with Canadian Blood Services (CBS) - March 17, 2020

Present:

CBS - Ellis Westwood, Director - Stakeholder Engagement, Public Affairs

TFC - Riyadh Elbard, Wala Azimi, Josie Sirna

Purpose: Check in by CBS with its stakeholders to hear the concerns of the community.

Ellis has been sharing regular updates to National Liaison Committee members, but it is important to get information from the community as well.

BLOOD SAFETY CONCERNS

Question	Response and Action items
Is COVID-19 transmittable by blood?	No. All the evidence shows that it is not blood-borne. Current evidence based and risk modelling show that it isn't blood-borne. Please refer to the link below for details: https://blood.ca/en/covid19#qas
Is there a test to screen blood for COVID-19?	There is no test that will screen blood for COVID-19.
Does the freshness of the blood make a difference on transmission of COVID-19?	See above – current evidence and modelling show that COVID-19 is not carried in the blood. There is no scientific evidence that freshness is an issue; however, CBS is like a “delivery system” and cannot determine how blood is distributed once delivered to the hospitals. Hospitals will have separate and individual policies and practices on how they issue blood to their patients.
Are there screening procedures in place? Before and after the March 16th.	Yes. Screening for wellness is on-going. March 16 th onward – designed to identify people who have had contact persons who have been travelling or had contact with a person under self-isolation or with a person with Covid-19. All travelers are asked to refrain from donating for 14 days or longer depending on existing travelers and travel destinations.
What happens to blood that was collected before the March 17 deferral changes were put in-place? Is it safe?	Yes. COVID- 19 is not transmitted by blood. These additional deferrals were put in place primarily to protect our staff and to ensure that our donor centers are free from risk and remain centers of wellness, also out of an overabundance of caution. So, blood that was collected both before and after these deferral changes is safe

BLOOD SHORTAGES CONCERNS

Question	Response and Action items
<p>Is there a shortage? Blood shortages - Concern about blood supply.</p>	<p>People are cancelling their appointments to donate. National emergency blood management committees at National Advisory Committee (NAC) on Blood. https://nacblood.ca/nac-sub-committees/index.html</p> <p>NAC are currently at green phase advisory. Putting hospitals on notice that there may be blood supply challenges. Checklist to help hospitals manage their supply. Shortages are more concerns about blood type rather than regions. Inventory is assessed on supply for daily requirements and expected demands not on quantity of blood units. O + and - is lower than other blood types. 2 days.</p>
<p>Is there a regional difference of supply?</p>	<p>They move blood across the country if needed. It is a national supply management so that regional supplies don't matter.</p>
<p>Are donor centers the only place to donate? Are pop-up mobile clinics not running?</p>	<p>Donation centers are cleaning more carefully and more frequently, e.g. touch screens are wiped down more frequently</p>
<p>What measures are in place to manage blood supply now? Event of a shortage, what are the contingencies in place?</p>	<p><u>Is there a shortage?</u> Not now.</p> <p>CBS is operating nationally in a 'green phase advisory' which is a formal mechanism with our government partners, hospitals and CBS to ensure mechanisms are in place to mitigate against shortages. As part of this, hospitals are required to send Canadian Blood Services their inventory levels daily so that we have a full picture not only of what is on our shelves but on hospital blood bank shelves nationally.</p> <p>This allows us to move blood across the country to where it is most needed. It also requires hospitals to look at best practices to minimize unnecessary red cell and platelet use to maximize supply.</p> <p>One development that is helping support adequate supply is decreased demand. Elective surgeries have been cancelled in some provinces and hospitals are also reporting reduced trauma patient volume due to lower serious accidents (e.g. car accidents) because so many people are staying at home.</p>
<p>What happens in the event of a shortage? What are the contingencies?</p>	<p>If our blood supply continues to decline, we will move to an "amber phase". This will activate a robust framework nationally to address shortages.</p>
<p>Purchase of blood from the US?</p>	<p>They don't purchase fresh or whole blood. They purchase plasma for fractionation. Once product goes through the fractionated product, it kills everything.</p>

ACTION TO INCREASE BLOOD DONATIONS

Question	Response and Action items
How can TFC help?	Get the word out. Amplify the messages. What to share? Repurpose the content on CBS' site.
Are mobile donation centers still in operation?	Yes. That said, messaging to donors should still direct them to our donation landing page at: https://myaccount.blood.ca/en/donate where they can easily locate the nearest donation centre.
Can CBS generate a Partners for Life code for TFC?	Action: Ellis will get back on this. It was noted that this is not urgent but would be a nice to have for tracking TFC's impact.

FURTHER QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

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