

MEMO

DATE: May 7, 2020

TO: Saskatchewan Clinical Care Providers

FROM: Dr. Sheila Rutledge Harding, Co-Chair, Provincial Emergency Blood Management Committee

RE: RECOVERY PHASE ADVISORY AFFECTING ALL BLOOD COMPONENTS AND PLASMA PROTEIN PRODUCTS

This is a notice of a Recovery Phase Advisory for all fresh blood components and plasma protein products, indicating a period of controlled transition to normal demand within hospitals. Careful monitoring of inventories is required as clinical services increase provincially and nationally. Please see the National Emergency Blood Management Committee (NEBMC) communication issued May 6, 2020 for details.

As the health system in each province and territory 're-opens', it is anticipated that the demand for fresh blood components and plasma protein products will increase as hospitals expand clinical services. The impacts of COVID-19 and the uncertainties related to this pandemic continue to affect blood supply planning at Canadian Blood Services (including physical distancing and public health measures at donor collection sites). **Ongoing alignment with strategies to maintain optimal use of fresh blood components is essential to ensure the continued availability of supply for patients requiring transfusion.** We encourage everyone to review the provincial *Transfusion Best Practice Recommendations in Adult Patients*, found here: <http://saskblood.ca/transfusion-best-practice-recommendations/>.

The blood supply on hand in Saskatchewan is currently able to meet clinical demand and will continue to be monitored closely to ensure this Recovery Phase is careful and controlled. We request your cooperation with continuing the following strategies to optimize our use of this vulnerable inventory:

Red Blood Cells (RBC):

- The decision to transfuse RBC should align with best practice recommendations.
- Requests for RBC transfusion to anemic hospitalized inpatients (without ongoing bleeding) will be limited to 1 unit at a time.
 - RBC order screening protocols have been implemented province-wide in accordance with the provincial *Transfusion Best Practice Recommendations in Adult Patients* to ensure appropriateness of requests in non-bleeding patients.
- In the setting of new patients with hemorrhage, blood group specimens must be drawn on arrival to allow for provision of group specific RBC as soon as possible. If uncrossmatched blood is required,
 - Group O Negative RBC will be issued for transfusion to women under 50 years of age; and
 - Group O Positive RBC will be issued to men and women 50 and older, in accordance with best practice recommendations. (*Exception: sites stocking only Group O Negative RBC*).

Safety | Accountability | Respect | Collaboration | Compassion

With a commitment to a philosophy of Patient and Family Centred Care

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Platelets:

- Requests for transfusion of platelets will be screened by the Transfusion Medicine Physician on-call in the following situations:
 - Non-bleeding patients with a platelet count $>10 \times 10^9/L$;
 - Bleeding patients with a platelet count $>50 \times 10^9/L$
- Activation of Massive Transfusion/Hemorrhage Protocols in Saskatoon and Regina will not routinely include a dose of platelets in Box 1. Issue of the platelet dose in Box 1 will be dependent on individual patient needs.

Plasma Protein Products: (factor concentrates, immunoglobulins, subcutaneous immune globulin, C1 esterase inhibitor)

- Hospital sites have implemented local protocols for home infusion product pick up to minimize patient or designate exposure to the hospital environment (e.g., porter delivery of product to the patient/designate at the facility's main door). Canadian Blood Services plasma protein product inventory is in good supply at this time.
- Clinical care providers of patients on home infusion products should notify patients to order their usual refill when they have **4 weeks** of supply remaining. **At this time, a refill volume of up to 3 months of product can be requested.** Patients should contact their local blood bank to confirm local pick-up procedures before presenting to hospital for product.
- A new *temporary* program for direct delivery of home infusion products to patients' homes will soon be available to individuals **with specific high-risk factors for COVID-19 infection (e.g., immune deficient, 65+ years old) AND who do not have a delegate who can pick up product from the hospital.** Prescribers of home infusion products will be provided with additional information, including forms to be completed and submitted for consideration.

Given the dynamic and evolving nature of this situation, the advisory status may change quickly if demand outpaces supply. Further communication and updates will be disseminated as they become available.

Full details of the Saskatchewan Blood Contingency Plan can be found at <http://saskblood.ca/resources/blood-shortage-plan/>.

Blood donation is encouraged in the coming months to help Canadian Blood Services maintain their supply. Please visit www.blood.ca for information. A special section on COVID-19 is included for donor information.

Please disseminate this information to departments or teams who may be impacted by this advisory.

If consultation with Transfusion Medicine is required by medical or laboratory staff, please contact the physician on-call for Transfusion Medicine in your area (see table below).

Thank you for your partnership as stewards of these limited and vulnerable resources.

 Provincial Transfusion Medicine Medical Consultation <i>Ask for the physician on call for Transfusion Medicine</i>
Saskatoon and Northern Saskatchewan 306-655-1000
Regina and Southern Saskatchewan 306-766-4444