



Advancing Transfusion and
Cellular Therapies Worldwide

March 9, 2020

Dear colleagues:

AABB urges you to consider the blood supply and develop a plan for your hospital's blood inventory as you continue to engage in efforts responding to the evolving coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19). We encourage you to proactively:

- Use your communication channels to highlight the importance of continued blood donation and ask your blood supplier how you can support their ongoing education and outreach efforts.
- Prioritize working with your blood bank and transfusion service to continuously assess your blood inventory in light of your hospital's utilization needs.
- Develop a hospital plan with strategies that address potential blood shortages.
- Engage in transparent communications with your blood supplier by sharing changes in your blood supply needs.

The AABB Interorganizational Task Force on Domestic Disasters and Acts of Terrorism, in coordination with the country's blood collection establishments, has been monitoring the evolving public health situation and preparing for potential further spread since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States earlier this year.

Individuals are not at risk of contracting COVID-19 through the blood donation process or via a blood transfusion, since respiratory viruses are generally not known to be transmitted by donation or transfusion. However, blood centers are experiencing a decrease in donation appointments and cancellation of blood drives due to travel restrictions and social distancing efforts. We are concerned that as COVID-19 continues to spread, it has the potential to adversely impact the availability of blood as more blood drives will be cancelled, fewer healthy donors will be available to sustain the blood supply and potential absenteeism among blood centers' staff may limit the ability to draw and process blood. While we cannot predict blood supply needs during a pandemic, we know that a sufficient supply of blood must remain available for providers to treat their patients.

We urge you to ensure that a sufficient blood supply will continue to be available for all patients in need by encouraging both current and first-time donors to make and keep appointments with blood centers in their communities. Additionally, we encourage you to consider partnering with a blood supplier to host a blood drive.



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We also recommend that you incorporate considerations related to blood availability into your COVID-19 response plans. AABB's resources, such as those on [COVID-19](#), [patient blood management](#), [recommendations on the use of group O red blood cells](#) and [FDA's Guidance entitled "Bacterial Risk Control Strategies for Blood Collection Establishments and Transfusion Services to Enhance the Safety and Availability of Platelets for Transfusion,"](#) may be helpful during this time.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact AABB at publicrelations@aabb.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debra S. BenAvram".

Debra S. BenAvram
Chief Executive Officer
AABB