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March 26, 2020

Re: March 24, 2020 Green Phase Advisory (Continued) from the National Emergency Blood Management Committee – Impact of COVID-19

Dear Hospital Colleagues,

On March 24, 2020 a notice of continuation of the Green Phase Advisory for all fresh blood components and plasma protein products from the National Emergency Blood Management Committee (NEBMC) was sent to your hospital. The impacts of COVID-19 continue to affect blood supply planning and forecasting from the Canadian Blood Services continues to predict a potential for shortages.

We strongly encourage all hospitals to continue implementing the recommendations brought forth in the March 19, 2020 letter. In addition to these recommendations, members of the Ontario Emergency Blood Management Committee (OEBMC) are advising hospitals to consider the following:

- Hospitals should review their current red cell inventory levels and reduce their target Green Phase levels by 10-20% to help preserve inventory, avoid overstocking, outdating and the need for redistribution. We are starting to see lower red cell demand due to reductions in elective surgeries and other hospital activities;
- As Canadian Blood Services is focusing on producing platelet pools to support hospital inventory, hospitals are encouraged to accept platelet pools that are close to outdate so that these products have a greater opportunity of being transfused before outdating;
- Hospitals that have not yet developed policies and procedures for substituting fibrinogen concentrate for cryoprecipitate are advised that they are now required to do so. While Canadian Blood Services continues to produce cryoprecipitate, there may be a need in the future to discontinue cryoprecipitate production to prioritize platelet production. In the event that this occurs, hospitals must have the capacity to order fibrinogen concentrate; and

- To minimize patients' or their designates' exposure to the hospital environment, hospitals are advised to evaluate protocols for home infusion patients picking up product. As recommended by the NEBMC, hospitals should not allow more than a maximum refill volume of 3-months of product for sustainability of the product supply (Please see attached the March 24, 2020 Green Phase Advisory for more guidance for hospital blood banks).

Our goal is to conserve blood and blood products for those most in need in light of the many efforts Canadian Blood Services is taking to mitigate against the pressures COVID-19 could have on the blood supply, along with the efforts being taken within our hospitals to respond to the rapidly changing situation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Thomas Smith, Team Lead, Drugs Programs Policy and Strategy at Thomas.Smith@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angie Wong', is positioned above the typed name.

Angie Wong
Director, Drug Programs Policy and Strategy

Attachment

c: Patrick Dicerni, Assistant Deputy Minister, Drugs and Devices Division, Ministry of Health
Ontario Emergency Blood Management Committee Members