

In one Canadian Province, Saskatchewan, private, for-profit paid donor clinics are licensed. This contravenes the most important aspect of our Canadian Blood transfusion service – that it is a voluntary, donor driven service. The importance of this is beyond mere semantics. We have in Canada established one of the safest and most efficient blood donation services in the World. That safety and efficiency are placed in severe jeopardy if significant numbers of donors who have hitherto been prevented from donating on safety grounds are now allowed to donate. And the diversion of blood products to the U.S. significantly reduces supply for domestic use.

From the organization Bloodwatch.ca

“Canadian Plasma Resources (CPR) already tried to set up a clinic in Toronto beside a homeless shelter and another clinic next to a methadone centre in Hamilton. Luckily, they were shut down by a unanimous vote in Ontario’s parliament in 2014. But now, CPR is setting its sights on the rest of the country.

CPR opened a clinic in Saskatchewan just a few months ago and is offering people \$25 gift cards to give blood plasma. This plasma is then exported to the US -- where it can be sold for up to \$300 on the international market, reaping huge profits for the private company.

Donating blood is part of being Canadian and a core part of our public healthcare system. Our tragic history with the tainted blood scandal showed just how dangerous private interference with our blood system can be.

Private blood brokering does not improve our public health system, it fractures it and creates an environment where corporate profiteers benefit from the commodification of human tissue. In the U.S., vulnerable people are selling their plasma to survive, and we should not let that happen in Canada.”

Changes to Donation Criteria

A frequent question blood donor chairmen are asked is who can donate. The recent changes to donation criteria can be found at: <https://blood.ca/en/blood/recent-changes-donation-criteria>

Certificates

District Blood Donor Chairmen can obtain certificates for Masons reaching a milestone donation. These are given for a first donation or any multiple of 25 thereafter. District Chairmen should contact me at forster.john@icloud.com.

R.W.Bro. John Forster, Team Leader

Donations Newsletter

Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario



A Newsletter on Ontario Masonic Blood Donations

January 2017

Blood Shortage

You may have seen stories in the media recently that Canada is facing a shortage of donated blood. Donations are down at a time when the need for blood is up. As a significant organization in the supply in this Province, Ontario Masons can do something about this. Please make sure that all lodge members are made aware of the need for them to contribute. Every effort we make is a highly appreciated one. Remember that there are numerous ways in which Masons can participate, not only by donating themselves but also by the following:

- Giving blood himself
- recruiting friends and family to donate
- enrolling in Partners for life
- volunteering at a clinic
- organizing a clinic
- asking questions about organ donation (Blood being the main but not the only organ capable of donation)
- completing his organ donor card on his driver's license and in his will

The winter weather has probably contributed to the reduction. But it will also have contributed to the need. Road accidents increase at this time of the year. The victims of these accidents frequently need transfusion. If these needs are met, and they must be, then the amount of blood remaining reduces hospitals' capacity to perform elective procedures causing delays in much needed work and back-ups throughout the system.

We can all help. The donation of blood is one gift which cannot be given on-line!

Lodges might consider sponsoring a clinic either on their own or by combining with a sister lodge. District Chairmen of blood donors should all have a contact at Canadian Blood Services who can assist in putting on these sponsor s clinics. They will provide posters and other printed information for the Lodge or Lodges to use.

Plasma Donation

This has become a very controversial topic. Plasma is the liquid part of blood. It is rich in proteins and vital enzymes. It is a valuable commodity as it can be used in the production of complex drugs. However most of the processing is done in the United States. Canadian plasma becomes a cheap raw material for very expensive drugs. The profits to a pharmaceutical company are huge. The problem arises because plasma collection can occur more frequently than blood donation as the cellular component of donated blood is put back into the donor.