



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Emergency Room Staff  
Medical and Nursing Staff  
Laboratory Staff

**FROM:** James J Jarnot, MBA, MT (ASCP), SC; Technical Director, CH Laboratory

**DATE:** March 16, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **Blood Supply Shortage due to COVID-19**

**CC:** Hans Cassagnol M.D., EVP, Chief Clinical Officer & Physician Executive  
Donald Slate, M.D., Medical Director, Kenmore Mercy Laboratory  
Barbara Stefanick M.D. Medical Director, CH Laboratory @ Sisters of Charity Hospital  
Sateesh Satchidanand M.D. Medical Director, CH Laboratory @ St Joseph Campus  
Michael Albert M.D. Medical Director, CH Laboratories, CH Laboratory @ Buffalo Mercy  
Walter Walek M.D. Medical Director, CH Laboratory @ Mt St. Mary's  
Usha Chopra M.D. Medical Director, CH Laboratory @ MACC

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Catholic Health Laboratory has been alerted by the American Red Cross (ARC), our primary supplier of blood products, that they are experiencing the adverse effects of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on their blood collection operations. "With a rapidly increasing number of blood drive cancellations across the country, the impact to the national blood supply is inevitable. We are steadfast in our efforts to recruit and collect blood despite these ongoing challenges; however, the volatility of the situation requires that we act now to safeguard the anticipated limited supplies."

The recommendation from ARC is to prepare and implement a contingency plan and consider the following:

- Communicate to all practitioners that the current COVID-19 pandemic has put tremendous strain on the blood supply.
- Prioritize coordination with the operating room, emergency department, and floor staff to avoid wastage due to temperature limits/time out of the blood bank.
- Verify that the transfusion is expected within the next 8 hours. Cancel orders where the clinical need has changed.
- Lower transfusion triggers for RBCs and platelet transfusions in clinically acceptable patients.
- For stable non-emergent patients, review orders  $\geq 2$  RBC units at one time (give one then reassess).
- Limit the use of O negative RBCs to women of child-bearing age and pediatric females. Use O positive RBCs for emergent transfusion of males and post-menopausal women.

For more information contact your site specific Laboratory Supervisor or Customer Service at 862-1150.