

Blood Watch

For Immediate Release: Canada

Monday, April 24th 2017

Media Contact: Borjana Dedoevic
647.802.2443 / borjanav@yahoo.com
<http://bloodwatch.org/>

BloodWatch Strongly Condemns Federal Approval Of Private Paid-Plasma Clinics

BloodWatch strongly condemns federal approval of a private for-profit paid-plasma collection business in Moncton, New Brunswick. Canadian Blood Services issued a stark warning in December of 2016 stating that private paid-plasma operations are harming the voluntary blood system in Saskatchewan, putting our national voluntary blood system at risk.

Health Minister Jane Philpott is directly ignoring the call by the national blood authority to safeguard the Canadian blood supply by continuing to approve private paid-plasma businesses. Ontario and Alberta have implemented provincial legislation banning the exploitative practice of blood for profit in order to override the egregious decision of the federal government to allow commercial blood brokers to operate. Quebec has had a ban in place since 1994.

There is a collective responsibility between Canadian Blood Services, the federal government and the provinces/territories to keep the Canadian blood system safe and secure. We are deeply concerned that a political decision has been made at the federal level to foster the business of blood for profit over the needs of Canadian patients. The federal decision to directly undermine our voluntary blood system has not been transparent and defies every single fundamental recommendation in the landmark Krever Inquiry on how to run a safe national public blood system in Canada.

Canadian Blood Services has provided BloodWatch with a letter confirming that plasma collected by Canadian Plasma Resources, will not be purchased by CBS or used for Canadian patients. The federal government simply cannot justify its support for Canadian plasma to be privately sold on the international market for profit while CBS implements a domestic plasma collection strategy in order to secure supply for Canadians.

Contrary to previous reports, paid-plasma operations have shown to harm voluntary blood systems in Germany and Austria (European Blood Alliance Report) and are now doing so in Canada. Self-sufficiency in Canada must be achieved through Canadian Blood Services as they are the only organization that can ensure the blood and plasma they collect will be used for Canadian patients. While other countries with similar blood systems to ours, such as Australia and New Zealand, work to limit use of plasma based medications from private paid-plasma sources and achieve self-sufficiency through voluntary donations, Canada is taking a step in the wrong direction.

We call on Prime Minister Trudeau to intervene on this issue, rescind the licenses granted to Canadian Plasma Resources and respect Canadian Blood Services' request to protect the Canadian blood system.

Public health policy must be guided by evidence-based decision-making and for the benefit of Canadian patients. Given our unique blood history in Canada and the incredible ramifications of our tainted blood crisis, ignoring the call from the national blood authority to end support for private paid-plasma in Canada in order to safeguard the blood supply, is an absolute dereliction of duty.

- Kat Lanteigne, Executive Director – BloodWatch.org

References Included:

<http://www.europeanbloodalliance.eu/>

http://www.who.int/bloodsafety/transfusion_services/blood_systems/en/

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/activit/krever-eng.php>

<http://start.emailopen.com/public1/ViewLP.aspx?id1=411253&id2=1063&id3=Rf63DiTj7s5GYc8&s5=>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/plasma-canadian-blood-services-1.3906721>