



HAE Canada on Paid Blood Plasma Donations

Toronto, March 20, 2013

HAE Canada shares the stated positions of the Canadian Blood Services¹ and the Canadian Hemophilia Society² that support the long-held practice of using plasma products that were sourced from paid blood donors in treatment of rare blood disorders. It has been recognized that the demand for plasma products has exceeded the Canadian capacity of plasma collection for decades. In fact, most of the world's supply of fractionated plasma products comes from paid donors. 80% of the plasma needed to manufacture products used in Canada comes from the USA, where donors are very likely to be paid for their plasma donations. HAE Canada considers these products safe and essential.

Plasma derived products are life-saving therapies for a number of rare blood diseases that affect thousands of Canadians, including our members who live with hereditary angioedema (referred to as HAE). HAE is a rare blood disorder resulting from a deficiency in C1 esterase inhibitor. It is a chronic, potentially life-threatening illness that causes episodes of swelling commonly affecting the face, throat, abdomen, and extremities. If left untreated, an upper airway obstruction can prove fatal for HAE patients.

The majority of people with HAE have a defective gene that results in their body producing inadequate or non-functioning C1 Inhibitor – the blood protein that stops swelling. There is no cure for HAE yet. The efficacy of plasma-derived C1-Inhibitor as replacement therapy for acute attacks of HAE has been documented. Soon, new prophylactic therapies may also be available in most provinces.

HAE Canada is a not-for-profit patient organization that provides education and support services for Canadian hereditary angioedema patients and their families. For more information, contact HAE Canada at info@haecanada.org. Please visit the HAE Canada website³ for further information about HAE and useful links.

Peter Waite, CAE
Executive Director

1.http://www.blood.ca/CentreApps/Internet/UW_V502_MainEngine.nsf/page/CanadianBloodServicesClarifiesItsRoleInTheNationalAndInternationalCollectionAndUseOfPlasma?OpenDocument&CloseMenu

2. <http://www.hemophilia.ca/files/Draft%20Policy%20on%20Paid%20Plasma%20Donations%2011-03-2013.pdf>

3. <http://www.haecanada.org/understanding/useful-links/>