The National Blood Shortages Plan - A summary

First released in 2009, and routinely revised, the National Plan for the Management of Shortages of Labile Blood Components is a framework developed by the National Advisory Committee on Blood and Blood Products (NAC) in collaboration with Canadian Blood Services and the Provinces and Territories. As a reference for provincial and territorial blood shortages plans, it promotes consistency, collaboration and recommendations to ensure an effective response to and management of a blood shortage. The National Blood Shortages Plan outlines four inventory availability phases: Green, Amber, Red, and Recovery. It also outlines the respective actions, roles, and responsibilities of all blood system stakeholders.

**Green Phase** implies that normal blood component inventory levels exist and supply generally meets demand. This phase includes a broad range of inventory levels ranging from an ideal inventory to shortages that occur periodically and can be managed with existing CBS and hospital/RHA actions.

**Green Phase Advisory** implies that CBS inventory levels are low with respect to a particular blood component and that all hospitals need to determine their inventories and the likelihood of crossing into Amber or Red Phase.

**Amber Phase** implies that the national blood inventory is insufficient to continue with routine transfusion practices and hospitals/RHA will be required to implement specific measures, as outlined in this document, in order to reduce blood usage.

**Red Phase** implies that blood inventory levels are insufficient to ensure that patients with non-elective indications for transfusion will receive the required transfusion(s).

**Recovery Phase** implies that blood component inventories have begun to increase and are expected to be maintained at a level.

The NAC oversees the plan with the NAC Blood Shortage Working Group considering enhancements to the document and managing revisions that are often initiated based on stakeholder feedback. This continuous improvement process is vital to ensure the National Blood Shortages Plan remains an effective framework and a centerpiece of great collaboration within the blood system in Canada. Canadian Blood Services is proud to be a partner and supporter of the plan. All hospital stakeholders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the National Blood Shortages Plan, corresponding provincial blood shortages plans, and local blood shortage contingency guidance documents.

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