

Canadian Blood Services

Building Resilience








Blood
for Life

Plasma
for Life

Stem Cells
for Life

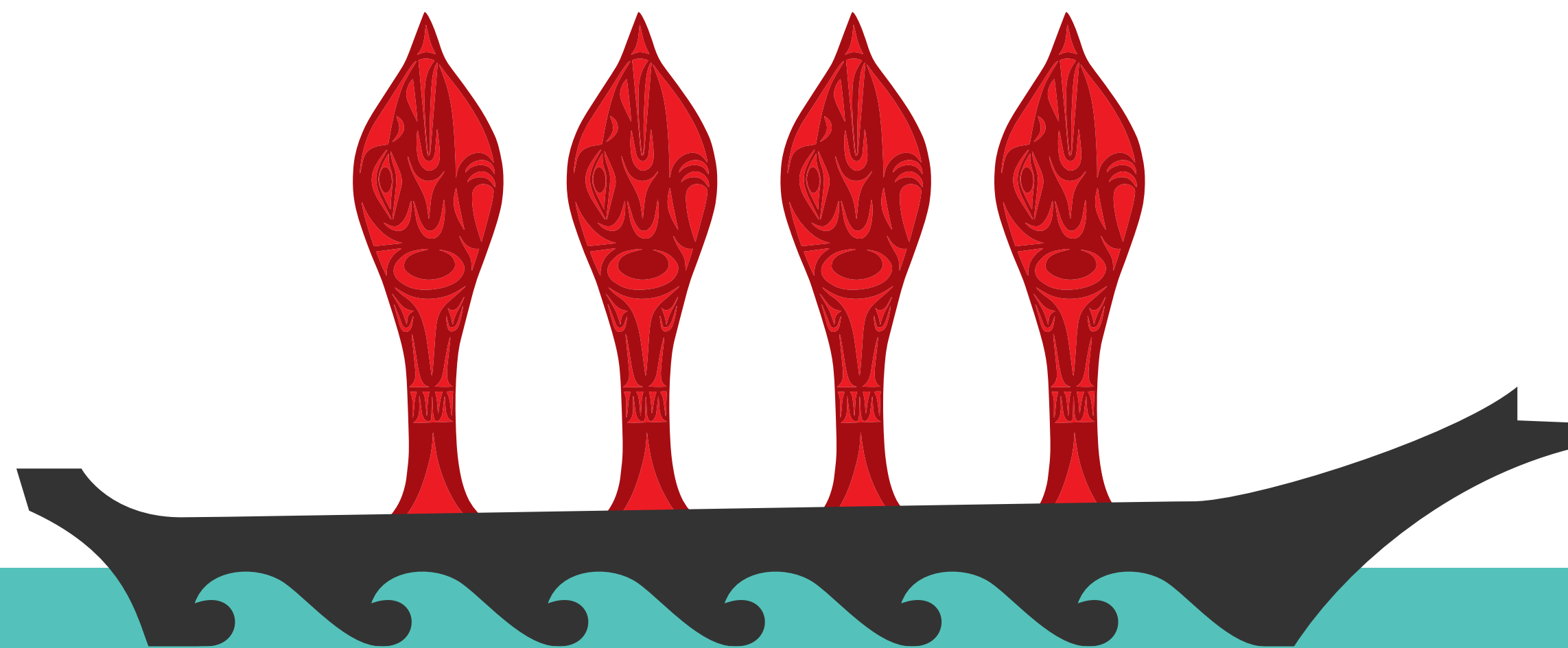
Organs & Tissues
for Life

Contents

 Overview	01	 Environment	30
Report parameters	01	Developing a comprehensive environmental strategy	31
A message from our chief executive officer	03	Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts	33
Who we are	05	Managing waste	37
What we believe: vision, mission and values	05		
What we do	06	 Governance	39
Where we operate	07	Our governance principles	40
Measuring our impact	08	Our role in health system governance	42
Our strategic commitment to sustainability	09	Our commitment to quality	43
Our sustainability priorities	10	Managing various dimensions of risk	44
Engaging with our diverse stakeholders	11	Protecting personal information and cybersecurity	45
Materiality assessment and matrix	13	Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain	46
Managing our ESG impacts going forward	14	Investing our financial assets responsibly	46
 Social	15	 GRI Content Index	47
Driven by social purpose	16		
Diversity, equity, inclusion and reconciliation	16		
Extending the lifeline	17		
Our people and culture	23		

Land acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the work of Canadian Blood Services spans many territories and treaty areas across the country. We recognize the land and waters that have inspired our work and offer gratitude to those Indigenous Peoples on whose territory we work, live and play.



“Hope Paddle” artwork by the late Temosen-THUT (Charles Elliott), an Elder, Traditional Knowledge Holder and a Coast Salish artist from the Tsartlip First Nation on southern Vancouver Island.

Report parameters

Scope of disclosure

This report reflects the operations of Canadian Blood Services. Our wholly owned captive insurance corporations, CBS Insurance Company Limited (CBSI) and Canadian Blood Services Captive Insurance Company Limited (CBSE), are largely outside the scope of this report, other than within the section on responsible investment of our financial assets. These entities are covered in the management analysis of our annual report.

Reporting framework

Examining a range of material environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics identified through our materiality assessment, the report has been produced in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards.

Reporting period

All reported data, unless noted otherwise, is from the Canadian Blood Services fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023, and ending March 31, 2024. Our sustainability report is published annually.

Publication date

November 2024

Independent assurance

This report has not undergone external assurance.

Review and approval

Content has been approved by the Canadian Blood Services executive management team and reviewed by the board of directors’ governance committee prior to publication.

Inquiries

For any questions related to this report or our overall approach to sustainability, please contact us: sustainability@blood.ca

Building Resilience

Canadian Blood Services has a deep sense of responsibility to the people and communities who count on us, to the employees and volunteers who help deliver our promise, to the partners who support and collaborate with us, and to the planet we inhabit together. As our organization provides the life essentials for transfusion and transplantation for patients across the country, we're committed to acting ethically, communicating transparently and building relationships grounded in trust with all who participate in **Canada's Lifeline**. They expect us to do the right thing — and that's what we expect of ourselves.

We're pleased to present this 2023–2024 sustainability report, our second annual update to stakeholders on efforts to address the environmental, social and governance (ESG) impacts of Canadian Blood Services.



*Bessie, blood recipient,
with her husband, Sal, blood donor*



Dr. Graham D. Sher.
 OC, MB BCh, PhD, FRCPC
 Chief Executive Officer

A message from our chief executive officer

We're very pleased to present our second annual sustainability report, which reviews the environmental, social and governance (ESG) impacts of Canadian Blood Services operations during our 2023–2024 fiscal year.

In my message introducing our previous, inaugural report, I emphasized that our commitment to advancing sustainability would only deepen and grow as we continued building the long-term resilience of our organization. That commitment was strengthened by work undertaken during the past year that has led to two milestone achievements:

In April 2024, Canadian Blood Services adopted a sustainability policy, formalizing the processes by which we weigh ESG factors in our day-to-day decision-making, as well as in our long-term planning. The policy is not simply a set of guidelines; it's a call to action. By elevating sustainability to an enterprise-wide statement of resolve — alongside policies governing safety, quality, privacy and risk — we reinforce to employees and all stakeholders that our sustainability agenda is integral to how we think and act in fulfilling our mission.

In the same spirit, as part of a broader organizational redesign, in May 2024 we announced the creation of a new division: Inclusion, Sustainability and Engagement. This evolution has unified our efforts to advance diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and reconciliation with our overall management of ESG impacts and our engagement with the stakeholders whose continued support is vital to our future. Combining these interrelated responsibilities in one portfolio led by

Dr. Eloise Tan — who, as vice-president, joins the executive management team — brings added focus and momentum to our work to ensure the resilience of **Canada's Lifeline**.

Signs of progress

This 2023–2024 report details many other important sustainability milestones of the past year. To highlight just a few:

- In May 2024, Canadian Blood Services offered a public apology acknowledging the harms experienced by gay, bisexual and queer men, trans people and other members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities because of our former donor eligibility policy. As I expressed to community members who gathered to hear the apology at our Ottawa headquarters, we hope this will be a foundation for building trust and repairing relationships going forward.
- Our latest employee inclusion survey has provided valuable insights into how people across Canadian Blood Services self-identify, as well as their workplace experiences in relation to gender, race and ethnicity, mental health and disability, among other factors. Leaders and their teams are now applying these insights as we work together to develop new inclusion goals and plan the work ahead.

Becoming a more sustainable organization is not just an aspiration reflecting our shared values; it's a business imperative that is central to achieving our mission.

- We're currently finalizing a comprehensive environmental strategy aimed at better aligning our efforts to reduce carbon emissions while also managing waste and water use across our operations. We expect to adopt the strategy in 2024–2025 and will be launching further initiatives in pursuit of the goals it maps out.
- And in the realm of governance, over the past year we integrated our new *Supplier Code of Conduct* into all of our procurement and vendor management processes, reinforcing the ethical standards and practices that define Canadian Blood Services and extending them further along our supply chains.

Core to our purpose

Beyond the specific metrics and updates presented in the following pages, this report underscores how sustainability is essential to the strategic trajectory of Canadian Blood Services. Becoming a more sustainable organization is not just an aspiration reflecting our shared values; it's a business imperative that is central to achieving our mission.

As a blood operator, a biologics manufacturer, a centre of research and development, and a provider of products and services to health systems, we've identified three sustainability priorities: *to reflect and serve the diversity of Canada; to create an inspiring, caring place to work; and to operate a climate-resilient, sustainable lifeline.* These priorities converge in a single objective: to deliver the products and services that patients across the country depend on to lead healthier and longer lives.

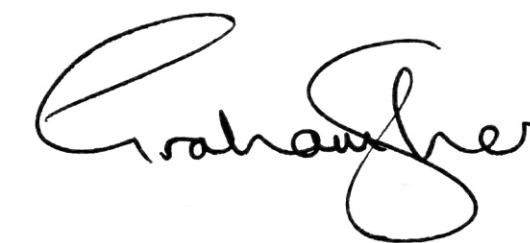
By diversifying our donor and registrant base, we can better represent the communities we serve and more optimally match the needs of patients from a wider range of ethnic and racial groups. By

fostering a workplace where team members are empowered to pursue innovative solutions, we can enhance the quality and outcomes of our work. And by addressing the impacts of climate change — including the disruptive effects of extreme weather on our operations and the influence of rising temperatures on the emergence of new pathogens and disease vectors — we can protect against environmental risks to blood system safety and the health of patients.

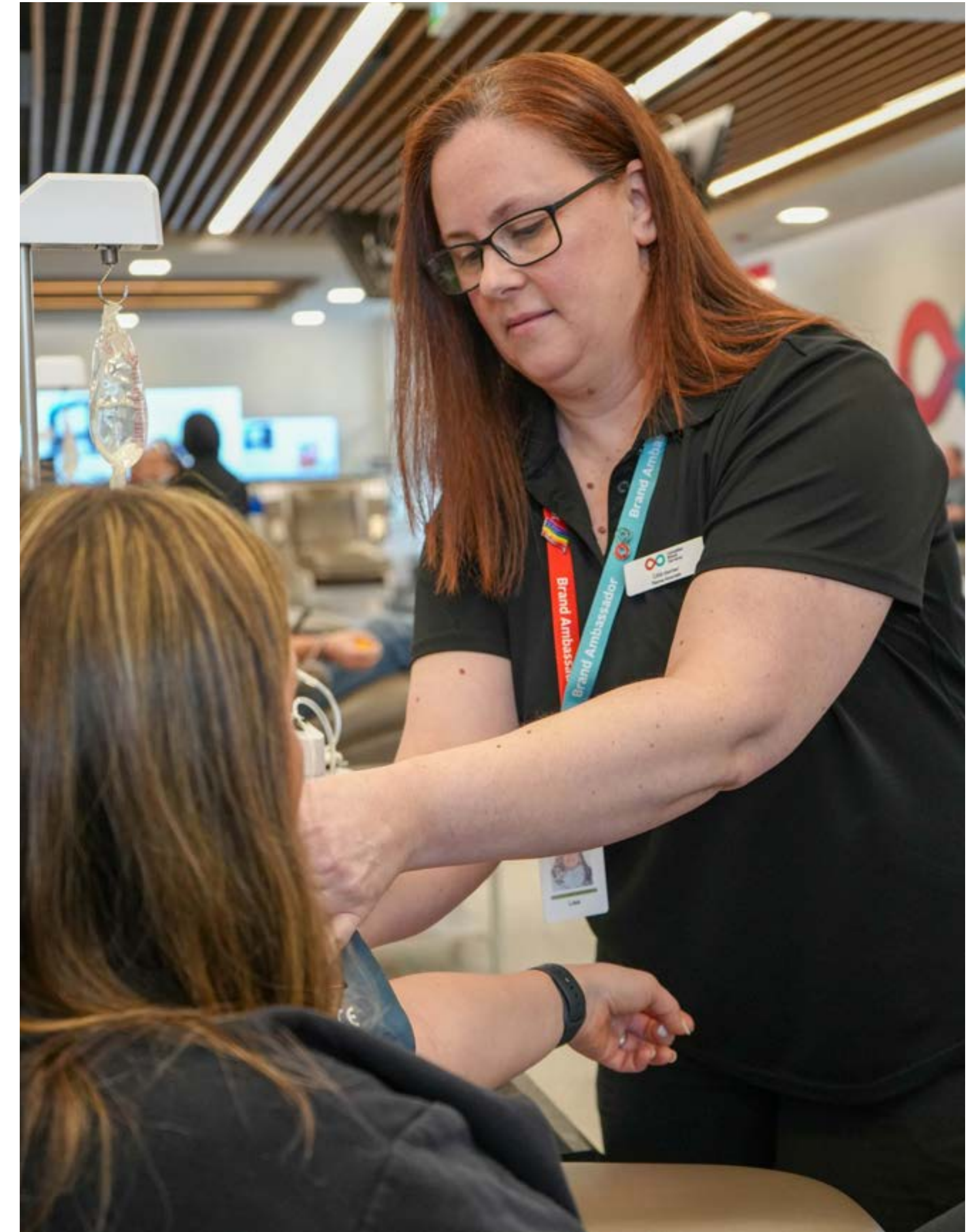
In all these respects, our sustainability agenda is core to our purpose — as evidenced by the many initiatives and achievements described in this report. We're publishing it now, just a half-year after our inaugural sustainability report, in part to more closely align with the data gathering and disclosure processes established for our annual report. But the fact that we have so much new information to share also speaks to the momentum with which this work is unfolding across our organization.

We look forward to reporting on our continued progress over the coming year. In the meantime, on behalf of Canadian Blood Services I want to reiterate our deep gratitude to the many stakeholders who actively support our sustainability commitment, including donors and registrants, patients and their care providers, governments and community members — and, of course, our dedicated employees and volunteers across Canada.

Advancing the various dimensions of sustainability is an ambitious and sometimes daunting challenge. But for people across Canadian Blood Services, that ambition is anchored by the deep sense of social purpose we share with our stakeholders. Since we began this collaborative journey more than a quarter-century ago, we've demonstrated time and again that when we all work together, anything is possible.



Dr. Graham D. Sher
 OC, MB BCh, PhD, FRCPC
 Chief Executive Officer



Who we are

Established in 1998, Canadian Blood Services is an independent registered charity. We receive most of our financial support from the governments of all provinces and territories except Quebec. Regulated as a biologics manufacturer by Health Canada, we are responsible for operating the national blood and plasma supply system, as well as the national public cord blood bank. In pursuing our mission as **Canada's Biological Lifeline**, we work to provide safe, reliable access to high-quality products and services required for the treatment and care of patients across the country.

Our organization was established through a memorandum of understanding between the federal, provincial and territorial governments (excluding Quebec) following the Royal Commission of Inquiry by Justice Horace Krever into Canada's blood contamination crisis. The principles articulated in Justice Krever's final report continue to guide our policy development and decision-making.

Canadian Blood Services provides blood components for transfusion, as well as cord blood stem cell products for transplantation. We also manage a formulary of plasma protein and related products used to treat a wide array of medical conditions. And we operate stem cell registry services on behalf of all provincial and territorial governments except Quebec. Our national transplant registry for interprovincial organ sharing and related programs extends to all provinces and territories.

We collaborate with patient groups, care providers, health system leaders, communities of donors, other blood service organizations and governments to continuously improve the effectiveness of Canada's health systems and achieve the best possible patient outcomes. Working with this diverse community of stakeholders, we contribute to the advancement and excellence of both national and international networks focused on transfusion and transplantation.

What we believe

Our vision

To help every patient To match every need To serve every Canadian

Our mission

We are *Canada's Biological Lifeline*

Our values

I

Integrity

We do the right thing, always. We do what we say we will do. We share information in an honest, transparent manner. We follow policies, processes and regulations.

C

Collaboration

We help each other. We engage those who are affected by our decisions. We listen with an open mind. We focus on solutions.

A

Adaptability

We embrace change. We keep learning. We seek new ideas and opportunities. We integrate better ways of working, quickly.

R

Respect

We treat everyone fairly. We are considerate and courteous to everyone. We value diversity in all its forms. We create and nurture an environment in which everyone feels included.

E

Excellence

We give our best every day, in all that we do. We take ownership of our work. We continuously improve our processes, products and services. We set increasingly higher standards for ourselves.

What we do

Blood for Life

Canadian Blood Services is responsible for managing the nation's blood supply. We collect, test and manufacture blood and blood products, including red blood cells, platelets and plasma for transfusion. We distribute these blood products to health care providers for the treatment of patients across Canada. We also provide diagnostic laboratory testing services in some provinces.

Plasma for Life

Of the plasma we collect and test in Canada, some goes to patients for transfusion, while most is shipped to pharmaceutical manufacturers contracted by Canadian Blood Services to produce medications for use by patients in this country. These medications — primarily immunoglobulins — form part of a national formulary of plasma protein and related products (PPRP) that we bulk-purchase from global providers and manage on behalf of all provinces and territories except Quebec.

Stem Cells for Life

We collect, test and manufacture stem cells obtained from cord blood. We also operate a national registry of adult stem cell donors and participate in an international network of donor registries to identify potential matches for patients requiring stem cell transplants. Together, these programs support better outcomes for people living with the many diseases and disorders that can be treated with transplanted stem cells.

Organs and Tissues for Life

We serve as the country's coordinating agency for organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT). We manage a national transplant registry for interprovincial organ sharing, as well as related programs for donation and transplantation. With our partners across the OTDT community, we also develop leading practices, support professional education and public awareness activities, and share data on the performance of the OTDT system in Canada.

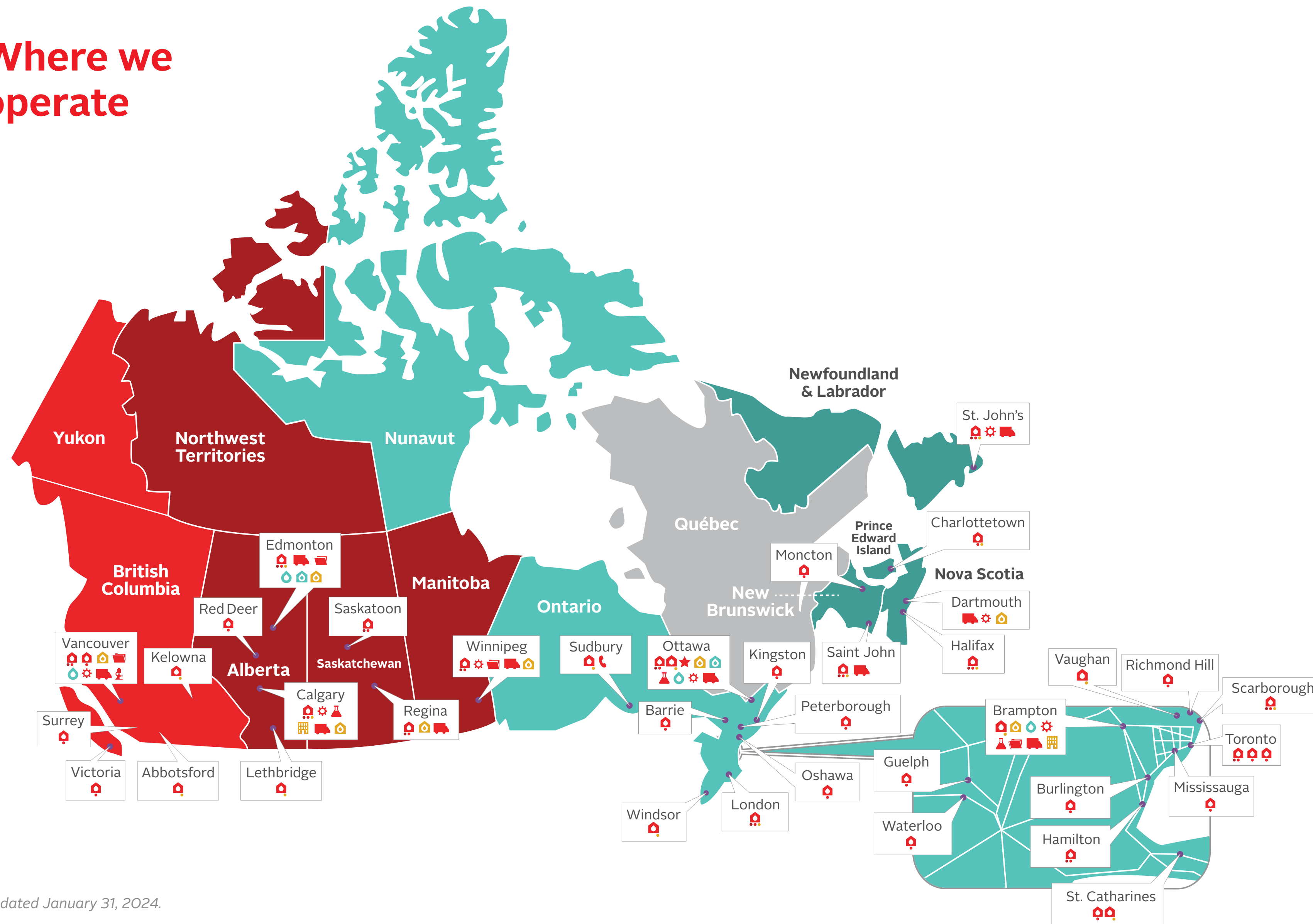
Research and innovation

To support our operations and advance transfusion and transplantation science and medicine, Canadian Blood Services conducts wide-ranging research and development activities. Our core research programs promote advances in the fields of transfusion, cellular therapies and transplantation medicine. We also participate in clinical trials and research led by others.

















Through these efforts, we help to introduce innovative products, important knowledge, enhanced safety and quality measures, and refined processes and technologies. Our work also facilitates problem-solving in the supply chain, contributing to optimal patient outcomes. We support professional education and public awareness initiatives related to transfusion and transplantation. And we regularly share insights and expertise with our health system partners, other stakeholders, governments and international blood service organizations.



Where we operate



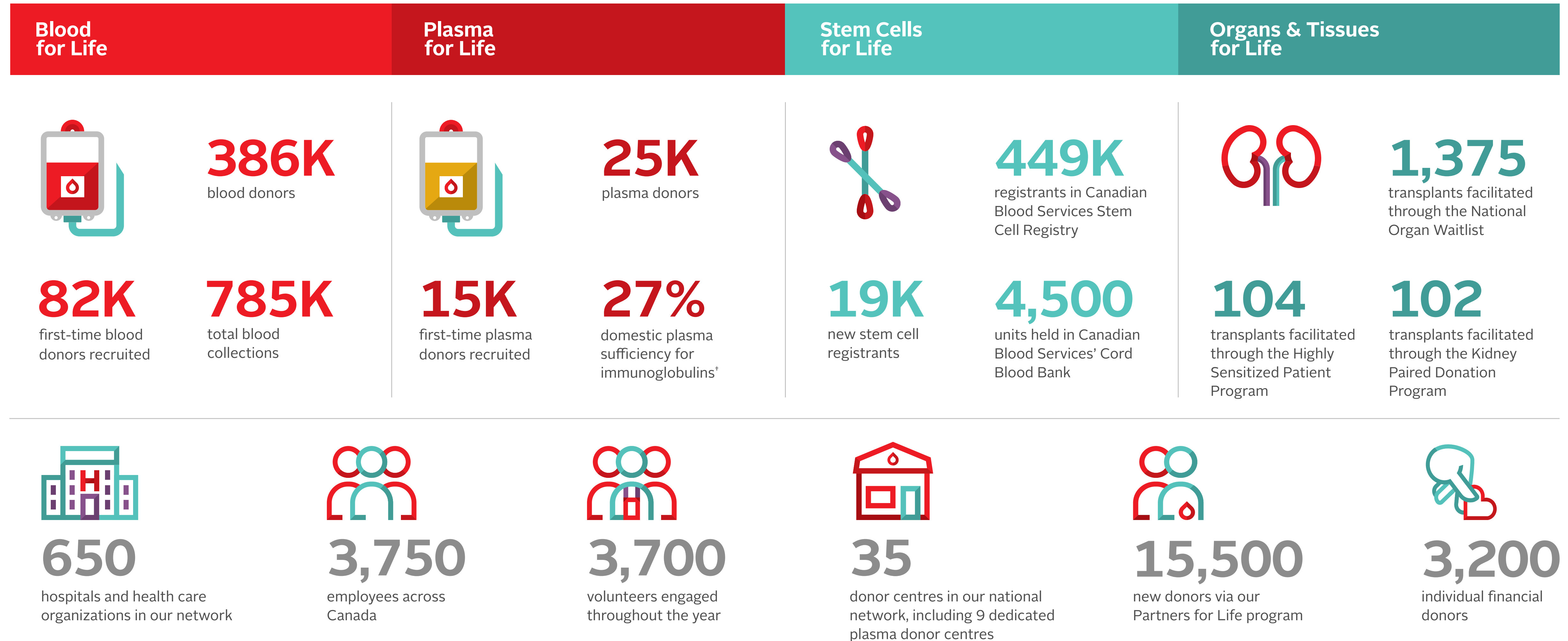
Legend

-  Whole blood, platelets and plasma collection
-  Whole blood and platelets collection
-  Whole blood and plasma collection
-  Whole blood collection
-  Plasma collection
-  Production
-  Testing
-  Distribution centre
-  National contact centre
-  PPRP distribution
-  PPRP* distribution warehouse
-  Diagnostic services
-  Head office
-  Centre for innovation
-  Cord blood collection
-  Cord blood and stem cell manufacturing

*PPRP stands for plasma protein and related products

Updated January 31, 2024.

Measuring our impact*



* All data from the 2023–2024 fiscal year. Totals have been rounded, except for Organs and Tissues for Life metrics.

[†]Significant year-over-year increase due to contractual agreement with Grifols, a global biopharmaceutical provider, which opened additional plasma donation centres to augment the Canadian Blood Services plasma collection network.

Our strategic commitment to sustainability

A deep sense of social responsibility is embedded in the founding principles of Canadian Blood Services and drives our evolution as **Canada's Lifeline**.

As we provide the life essentials for transfusion and transplantation to patients across the country, we're committed to acting ethically, communicating transparently and earning the trust that Canadians have invested in us. They expect us to do the right thing — and that's what we expect of ourselves.

People across Canada have intensified their efforts to advance sustainability in recent years, even as they've faced dramatic disruptions while trying to keep pace with accelerating change. The COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to putting unparalleled strains on health systems, underlined the longer-term challenge of ensuring equitable access to treatment and care. The pandemic has also had a lasting impact on society generally, transforming how we live and work.

At the same time, governments, institutions and organizations in all sectors have faced calls for social equity and inclusion. And around the globe, the rising frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters has made clear that the need for decisive action on climate change grows more urgent every day.

In response to these and other social and environmental challenges, we saw a need to align sustainability initiatives across Canadian Blood Services in a more systematic and formalized framework. The result is our strategic commitment to sustainability, which guides our actions today and is helping us chart a course for the future.

Sustainability is core to our purpose

Underpinning everything we do at Canadian Blood Services are three principles that dictate our operational priorities and support us in delivering our mission. These three pillars guide every aspect of the work we do together, including our commitment to sustainability.

Safeguard:

Our primary responsibility is to ensure the quality and safety of our products and services.

Engage:

We maintain strong connections with donors, colleagues, hospitals and partners.

Improve:

Continuous improvement ultimately means more lives saved and more health restored.



Cara, cord blood donor, with her son Jasper

Our sustainability priorities

We have many initiatives underway to help us operate more sustainably while encouraging support from all contributors to **Canada's Lifeline**. In light of our guiding purpose and the scope of our impact — as a blood operator, biologics manufacturer, centre for research and development, and provider of products and services to health systems across Canada — **we focus our sustainability efforts on three priorities:**

Reflect and serve the diversity of Canada

Continue building an equitable and inclusive organization that meets the transfusion and transplantation needs of patients from communities across Canada.

Safeguard

Foster diversity among our donors and registrants.

Engage

Build relationships with communities underrepresented in **Canada's Lifeline**.

Improve

Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Create an inspiring, caring place to work

Foster a supportive and collaborative workplace where team members feel empowered to be their best and to make meaningful contributions through their work.

Safeguard

Protect and promote employees' health and well-being.

Engage

Foster personal growth and professional development.

Improve

Create the flexible, supportive work environment of tomorrow.

Operate a climate-resilient, sustainable lifeline

Build operational resilience and reduce our environmental impact in the face of climate change as we protect and serve the patients who rely on our lifesaving products and services.

Safeguard

Manage climate impacts to sustain our support for patients and their care.

Engage

Empower participants in **Canada's Lifeline** to adopt sustainable practices.

Improve

Reduce and mitigate our organization's environmental impacts.

Safeguard

Engage

Improve

Engaging with our diverse stakeholders

Canadian Blood Services has a wide range of stakeholders, and connecting with them to build and sustain relationships can be a complex undertaking. But our efforts are anchored by a set of core beliefs defining what positive engagement looks like.

It's about listening, learning and understanding diverse experiences and points of view. It's about sharing information, answering questions and exchanging ideas. And it's about exploring and developing solutions with donors and registrants, patients and their families, care providers, health systems and the broader community.

Stakeholders' insights inform how we arrive at strategic and operational decisions. They guide how we improve our products and services. And they provide vital context for our policy development and regular updates on progress. By fostering open and honest dialogue, we build trust and earn the support we need to deliver on our purpose.

Who we engage with

We define stakeholders as organizations, groups and individuals who are affected by the actions of Canadian Blood Services, or who currently or may in future have an impact on what we do. Our principal stakeholders include donors and registrants; patients who depend on our products and services; clinicians and care providers; our hospital customers; health system administrators; medical and scientific researchers; representatives of equity-deserving groups; community and special interest organizations; other representatives of civil society; policymakers and regulators; our suppliers and service providers — and, of course, our diverse employees and dedicated volunteers across Canada.

How we connect

We've created a range of channels and platforms for engaging with stakeholders:

- Our **Stakeholder Trust Survey** invites feedback from key constituencies on how we're fulfilling our promise as **Canada's Lifeline**. The 2023–2024 survey, which had an overall 73 per cent response rate, yielded the following highlights:
 - 86 per cent of respondents are very satisfied with the engagement efforts of Canadian Blood Services.
 - 94 per cent are very satisfied with our management of the blood supply system in Canada.
 - 86 per cent are very confident that we genuinely consider input from stakeholders.
 - 88 per cent are either very satisfied or satisfied that we're effectively meeting patient needs.
 - Specifically with regard to patient organizations, the majority surveyed believe that Canadian Blood Services (a) does a good job of ensuring the safety of products we provide for clinical care, (b) has implemented suggestions they've offered, (c) engages well with stakeholders generally and (d) acts in the best interests of the public.

Stakeholders' insights inform how we arrive at strategic and operational decisions. They guide how we improve our products and services.



Nadine, left, and Diane in our plasma donor centre in Sudbury, Ont., after Diane's third plasma donation.



- We conduct **additional surveys and focus groups** on a regular basis to gauge opinions and sentiments among donors, volunteers, employees and other stakeholders.
- Our **Patient Engagement Forum** brings together a diverse group of patient representatives and organizations who rely on our products and services, inviting them to discuss issues and directions in health policy.
- Canadian Blood Services holds **open board meetings** twice a year in different cities across the country, providing a platform for stakeholders to share their views, ideas and concerns with our board of directors and executive management team.
- At **recruitment and awareness-raising events** across Canada, we engage with donors and registrants (both existing and prospective), along with other community members who have an interest in Canadian Blood Services.
- We have **ongoing consultations** with relevant stakeholders in all the areas of transfusion and transplantation medicine who depend on our products and services.

What we discuss

Topics on which we frequently engage with stakeholders include: recruiting new donors and registrants; improving the donor experience; changes in donor eligibility criteria; identifying and addressing barriers to donation; equitable access to health care; building trust with equity-deserving communities — particularly those currently underrepresented in our donor and registrant base; our evolving plasma strategy; domestic plasma sufficiency for immunoglobulins; how we evaluate and address rare diseases; patients' participation in research initiatives; selection and procurement of new plasma-derived medications for our national formulary; updates on other product innovations, substitutions and transitions; genotyping and genetic testing; and how we manage collection, production, distribution and all other aspects of our supply chain.

What they can expect

For nearly three decades, our stakeholders have given us the benefit of their rich insights, unique perspectives and lived experiences. We've worked together to reach important decisions that are grounded in concrete evidence and that lead to equitable change for the better. Going forward, we'll continue to listen closely to all our stakeholders, incorporating their input whenever possible and underlining how their views shape our decision-making — because meeting and exceeding their expectations remains vital to our success.

Participants at the "Shine A Light" donor recruitment event in Toronto.

Materiality assessment

In 2022, we undertook our first materiality assessment — a comprehensive evaluation of various environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics and their relative importance to Canadian Blood Services and our stakeholders.

The assessment process included consultations with internal and external stakeholders, a systematic benchmarking exercise and an in-depth review of trends in the biologics industry and the health sector generally. We surveyed donors and registrants, members of health-focused interest groups and our own employees. We also conducted interviews with our board of directors.

In total, we analyzed the views of more than 2,300 people. We asked stakeholders to rate the relative importance of ESG topics we’d identified as material — that is, issues with the potential to affect the long-term viability of our organization. We then provided the assessment results for review by our executive management team and our board of directors.

What the assessment revealed

Our consultations confirmed two expectations that we consider foundational to the mission of Canadian Blood Services: stakeholders expect us to ensure the safety and quality of our products and services; and to operate ethically and with integrity. These “table stakes” commitments frame how we approach all other topics represented in our materiality matrix.

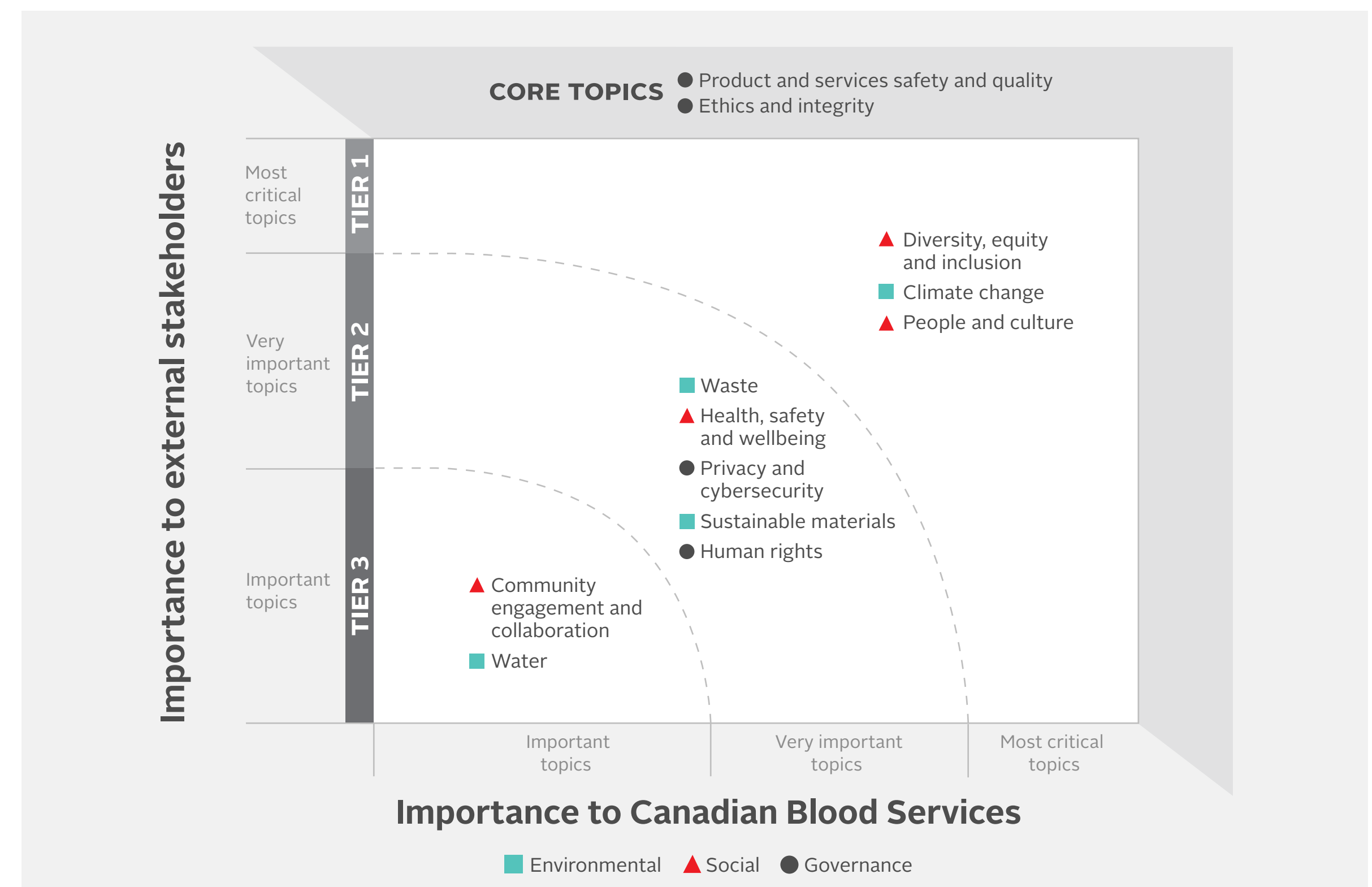
While this first materiality assessment was robust and guided by recognized standards, it’s by no means etched in stone. Going forward, we expect to evolve our consultative approach, broadening outreach to engage with a more diverse range of stakeholders while deepening our relationships with existing ones.

The assessment process included consultations with internal and external stakeholders, a systematic benchmarking exercise and an in-depth review of trends in the biologics industry and the health sector generally.

Our materiality matrix

By organizing material ESG topics in a tiered matrix, we’re able to focus on what matters most to our stakeholders.

The graphic below shows how the top dozen topics surfaced through the assessment process are prioritized within our overall sustainability framework. It highlights issues that represent the most promising opportunities for Canadian Blood Services, along with those that pose the greatest potential risks to our operational resilience.*



*We’ve modified several topic names from the original materiality survey to align with our current strategic plan, published in April 2024.

Managing our ESG impacts going forward

In 2023–2024, we built on our initial strategic framework to develop a sustainability policy for Canadian Blood Services. Released in April 2024, the new policy formalizes the processes by which we weigh environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in our day-to-day decision-making, as well as in our long-term planning.

Moving forward, our sustainability commitment will become even more integral to how we fulfill the needs of patients and health systems while also meeting the expectations of communities and governments — and, as always, supporting our employees and volunteers. As we embed the advancement of DEI into all areas of our operations, we'll continue working to address barriers to inclusion, enabling more equitable access to our products and services, and deepening our support for all communities across Canada.

At the same time, we'll work to mitigate, reduce and, wherever possible, eliminate negative impacts. We'll focus on maintaining the safety, integrity and accountability of **Canada's Lifeline**. And above all, we'll strive to show how the pursuit of sustainability leads to positive outcomes today while creating new opportunities for the future.

Our 2023–2024 sustainability report

In engaging with the diverse stakeholders of Canadian Blood Services — including donors and registrants, patients, care providers, community groups, employees and volunteers — we identify and evaluate the issues that matter most to them. We then leverage this materiality assessment to set clear priorities for the future. And we follow the globally recognized GRI Standards in reporting on our activities and their impacts going forward.

As these aligned efforts continue to gain momentum across our organization, we're pleased to provide an update on progress in this 2023–2024 sustainability report. The following pages detail how we're fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to us in three principal areas: Social, Environment and Governance.



Social

Our efforts to advance the social dimension of sustainability are grounded in the work that people across Canadian Blood Services are doing every day to support patients, donors and health care providers. In reporting on this aspect of ESG, we focus on two areas. First, how we extend **Canada's Lifeline** by growing and diversifying our donor and registrant base, by engaging directly with communities and by advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Second, and equally important, how we foster an inclusive, healthy and supportive culture within our own organization.



Driven by social purpose

Social responsibility is at the heart of our purpose as **Canada's Lifeline**. We're committed to providing people across the country with safe, reliable access to high-quality products and services, and to working with our health system partners to deliver the best possible patient treatment and care. Everything we do is ultimately aimed at advancing overall health and well-being.

We can point to many facets of our organization's social impact: on patients, who need our products and services to lead better and longer lives; on donors and registrants, for whom we strive to be inclusive in welcoming their vital support; on communities, who expect us to reflect their diversity as we help enable equitable access to life essentials; and on health systems, which collaborate with us in improving patient outcomes.

The following section presents highlights of our recent progress in the social category of ESG reporting. But in all sections of this report, the updates and explanations we offer demonstrate the deep sense of social purpose summed up in our vision: *to help every patient, match every need and serve every Canadian.*

To maintain reliable access to life essentials for transfusion and transplantation, it's essential that we have greater racial and ethnic diversity in our donor and registrant base.



Misha and Zoey, seeking a stem cell match.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and reconciliation

Across our organization, Canadian Blood Services is committed to fostering diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

As we engage with diverse communities, we seek to build and sustain meaningful relationships anchored by respect, fairness and trust. Together, we're working to remove barriers to inclusion for donors and registrants, and to help ensure patients of all backgrounds and identities receive the best possible treatment and care.

Within our organization, we strive to attract diverse talent and empower employees to achieve their potential. We're resolved to address systemic racism and all other forms of discrimination and exclusion. And we're shaping a culture in which employees, as well as volunteers and community partners, feel they can safely bring their true selves to the work we do together, with everyone contributing meaningfully to **Canada's Lifeline**.

This collective commitment is guided by policies and practices that will continue to evolve in the years to come. Advancing DEI and reconciliation is a core priority within our sustainability strategy, as it's the key to building an organization that reflects and serves the diversity of Canada.

To ensure our base reflects the communities we serve, we're collaborating on more inclusive approaches to recruiting and engagement.



Student volunteers at a recruitment booth, signing up donors for an on-campus donation event at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ont.

Extending the lifeline

Canada's Lifeline is sustained by hundreds of thousands of generous people across the country who give whole blood, plasma and cord blood, who sign up for our stem cell registry and who register to become organ donors.

To meet current and future demand for these biological products, we need to both expand and diversify our base of support. That starts with creating a positive experience for all donors and registrants — as well as for our volunteers and financial contributors — whether we're working to attract new supporters or to retain those already in our network.

Concurrently, we must build and strengthen relationships with diverse communities to ensure we can fulfill their needs as both donors and patients. Canada has long been recognized as one of the world's most multicultural nations, and international migration has fuelled strong population growth. Canadian Blood Services is therefore focused on engaging with immigrants and newcomers to this country to ensure that our donor base reflects all of society, especially in racial and ethnic diversity. Equally important, our community building must honour the diverse perspectives of the Indigenous Peoples who have been on this land since time immemorial.

Grow and diversify our donor and registrant base

In recent years, we've faced constantly changing clinical demand for blood products and stem cells. At the same time, donors' preferences and patterns of support have been changing as well. To ensure we have a sufficiently large and resilient base to address patient

needs, we're more focused than ever on attracting and retaining donors and registrants. To that end, we've been evolving every aspect of engaging with Canadian Blood Services, from the features on our mobile app to the design of our donor centres, as we strive to meet and exceed the expectations of these vital supporters.

To ensure our base reflects the communities we serve, we're collaborating on more inclusive approaches to recruiting and engagement. If we're to maintain reliable access to life essentials for transfusion and transplantation, it's essential that we have greater racial and ethnic diversity in our donor and registrant base. This will allow us to continue meeting the needs of patients who require specially matched products that often come from donors of similar ethnic backgrounds or ancestry.

We also engage with underrepresented and equity-deserving communities to build trust, address barriers to inclusion and co-create more effective recruitment strategies. And as testing and research continue to advance, we regularly review our eligibility criteria to remove barriers to donation when the safety of both donors and recipients is assured.

- In November 2023, we ended our deferral policy for blood donors who may have been exposed to variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) while abroad. This had been in effect since the late 1990s, when an outbreak of so-called “mad cow disease” threatened livestock around the world. Little was known about the human form of the illness, vCJD, including whether it could be transmitted via blood. As a precaution, blood operators globally deferred donations from people who had spent time in regions where the chance of acquiring the illness was higher.

The deferral, affecting current and former residents of the United Kingdom, France, Ireland and a dozen other countries, was meant to be temporary. But it took nearly 30 years of surveillance and research before scientists could give those affected a green light for blood donation. The welcome change in our eligibility criteria added more than 10,000 previously deferred donors to our base by the end of 2023–2024, and we expect that growth to continue as we reach out to additional donors across Canada who were previously ineligible to donate. *(For more on this topic, please see “Ending ‘mad cow’ deferrals” in our annual report.)*

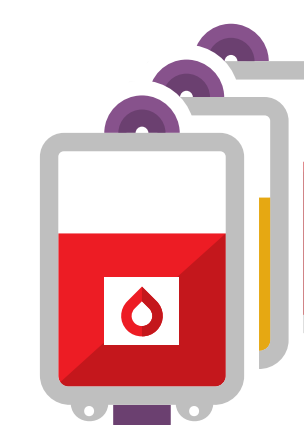
- **In January 2024, we launched a new survey platform to gain deeper insights into donors’ experience with us and how we can keep them coming back.** Over the next three months, some 32,000 donors of blood, plasma and platelets shared their post-donation feedback — participation that has been sustained into the current fiscal year. Using analytics software, our donor experience teams evaluate the survey data to learn how people perceive their donor centre visits and how we can further improve their experience.



David became eligible to donate blood for the first time in 28 years after restrictions related to mad cow disease were lifted.

One important metric we track is overall satisfaction, an indicator of donors’ long-term loyalty. During the initial three-month reporting period, 87 per cent of donors rated their satisfaction level as either 9 or 10 on an ascending 10-point scale. Other factors illuminated by the survey include sentiment (positive, neutral or negative); effort required to donate; whether donors felt respected and appreciated; and how likely they are to recommend the experience to others (known as the net promoter score). An AI-based tool identifies potential issues and flags them to donor centre supervisors or donation event organizers for follow-up, supported by our National Contact Centre.

Powerful technology tools allow us to listen to donors and act promptly on what we hear. Whether we’re thanking someone for their valued support, addressing a concern or further explaining a temporary donation deferral, the goal is the same: to build strong, lasting relationships grounded in trust.



32,000 donors of blood, plasma and platelets shared their post-donation feedback in the first three months of launching our new survey.

As testing and research continue to advance, we regularly review our eligibility criteria to remove barriers to donation when the safety of both donors and recipients is assured.

- **Our experts are working to better understand the perspectives of potential donors who are trans or gender diverse.** Dr. Jennie Haw and Dr. Elizabeth Vesnaver, social scientists who work at Canadian Blood Services, have conducted in-depth research with members of trans and gender diverse communities, as well as with prospective blood and plasma donors who identify as gay, bisexual or men who have sex with men (gbMSM). Their work illuminates barriers to inclusion, along with enablers and mitigating factors that may impede our recruiting and engagement — even since our adoption of more inclusive sexual behaviour-based eligibility screening for blood and plasma donors in 2022. The two social scientists have also collected recommendations from study participants on how we can make the donation experience more welcoming for 2SLGBTQIA+ donors.
- **We're evolving our registration and screening practices for trans, non-binary and gender diverse donors.** Recognizing the urgent importance of improving the donation experience for these communities, we've begun consultations with impacted and prospective donors on a number of initiatives, including the introduction of changes that will allow a donor's chosen name or name-to-use to be recorded in our appointment booking system. We're also working to expand the system's gender registration options beyond binary categories.
- **We're supporting efforts to make organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT) more inclusive.** A key part of our purpose as **Canada's Lifeline** is to facilitate collaboration across the OTDT community. And in fulfilling that role, one of our core beliefs is that an individual's sexual orientation should have no bearing on their eligibility

to donate biological products. So over the past year we've been collaborating with Egale, a leading 2SLGBTQIA+ organization, and Dr. Murdoch Leiss of the University of Manitoba to develop an education program on sexual orientation and gender identity for OTDT health professionals. The OTDT community's collective goal is to ensure more sensitive and inclusive care for 2SLGBTQIA+ donors and recipients.

Build stronger community relationships

We engage and collaborate with diverse communities to strengthen trust, evolve better-informed policies and processes, and co-create solutions that will make **Canada's Lifeline** more inclusive. Across the country, organizations representing racialized and equity-deserving groups — including Black Donors Save Lives, the Canadian Council for Muslim Women, and Autism Canada — are sharing their valuable perspectives and lived experiences as we work together to identify and remove barriers to donation.

- **We've launched web-based content showcasing Black and South Asian communities, who are underrepresented in the blood system.** Informed by insights gathered through focus groups (see sidebar, "Focusing on change") and other engagement activities, this new online platform reflects the needs of Black and South Asian donors and registrants to see themselves better represented in our content — and to gain a deeper understanding of why their contributions to **Canada's Lifeline** matter.



Charles, blood recipient, left, Julie, blood donor and recipient, centre, and Visaree, blood donor and recipient, right, at a video shoot at Canadian Blood Services' donor centre in Scarborough, Ont.

Focusing on change

As a Black resident of Toronto, Visaree understands that many people in her community mistrust the health system because of historical and ongoing racism. "A lot of people in my family, my community, they're afraid of donating blood," she says. "They don't want to." But her own perspective is shaped by the fact that when she was a young child, her mother was seriously injured in a car accident. "If blood wasn't there when she needed it," Visaree explains, "I don't know if she would have made it." Inspired by her mother's story, she has already donated blood three times. And she'll likely give again, even as she empathizes with those who've had different experiences.

Visaree shared her insights at one of two major focus groups hosted by Canadian Blood Services in 2023–2024 for members of African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) and South Asian communities. Participants from across the Greater Toronto Area talked about

their experiences with the blood supply system, while our teams provided information showing how blood donation, along with registering to donate stem cells or organs and tissues for transplant, can help save lives — including those of people in their communities.

Focus groups like these are helping us better understand what prevents some members of racialized and ethnically diverse communities from participating in **Canada's Lifeline**. Hearing directly why people experience challenges or barriers to inclusion when engaging with us — and combining those insights with findings from our social science researchers and our engagement with underrepresented communities — will help us improve our recruitment, messaging and outreach efforts. Even more importantly, it will help us enhance the donation experience for people from these communities.

- Our focus on increasing donor diversity intersects with another priority — matching products to patient needs — in our support for people with sickle cell disease.** This illness affects more than 6,000 people across the country, and we expect that number will continue to grow. People with sickle cell disease often need regular red blood cell transfusions over their lifetime. And the high number of transfusions required, plus the impact of the disease itself, can lead to a greater likelihood of side effects. The risk can be minimized if donors have closely matched blood types. Moreover, because this biological trait is inherited, the best outcomes tend to occur when donors are of similar ethnic or ancestral backgrounds. The challenge is that most sickle cell patients have ancestors from Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America, the Middle East and South Asia — geographies that are underrepresented in our donor base.

We're therefore focused on raising awareness in these communities — including through our new webpage illuminating the important link between blood donation and sickle cell disease — and on collaborating to remove barriers to donation. From our support for World Sickle Cell Day (June 19th) to our engagement with organizations like the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada, the Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario and Black Donors Save Lives, we're building trust with community members, learning what kinds of information are most relevant — and then developing inclusive, culturally relevant strategies to recruit and engage more donors who can help save lives. *(For more on this topic, please see "Finding the right match" in our annual report.)*

- We're also working to remove barriers to donation for people potentially exposed to malaria, a blood-borne disease that is spreading as our planet grows warmer.** Contracted by humans from certain types of mosquitoes, malaria is a life-threatening infection carried by parasites that can be transmitted through blood transfusions, as well as via organ and stem cell transplants. Because these parasites can lie dormant for decades, anyone who's ever had malaria is not eligible to give blood.

As a further precaution, we also screen donors to see if they may have been exposed to malaria in areas where it's prevalent. While this further protects the blood supply, it leads to donation deferrals that disproportionately affect African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) and South Asian communities. We know this can be very frustrating, especially for those who've encountered other barriers to donation. So for the past two years we've been studying ways to make malaria-related eligibility criteria more inclusive while reinforcing blood system safety.

After in-depth consultations with clinicians, researchers and community members, we've collectively endorsed the adoption of nucleic acid testing (NAT) to detect malaria pathogens in the blood of potential donors. Once it's approved by our regulator, Health Canada, we expect to integrate NAT into our screening practices and welcome more donors to **Canada's Lifeline**. *(For more on this topic, please see "Malaria: a safe, inclusive response" in our annual report.)*



Canadian Blood Services employees at a Pride event in Saskatoon, Sask. Since the implementation of sexual behaviour-based screening in 2022, we've been attending Pride events to engage with 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and deepen our understanding of people's experiences.

- Our Partners for Life program comprises over 12,700 community groups and organizations across the country who've pledged to support Canada's Lifeline.** Participants help patients and health care providers in myriad ways: by donating blood or plasma; by joining our stem cell registry; by signing up as organ or tissue donors; by volunteering at our donor centres and community events; by giving financially; and by generally helping raise awareness of all that Canadian Blood Services does. Each Partners for Life team has a designated champion who rallies their colleagues, members or customers. These champions work with us to organize group donations and registrations, host fundraisers and take part in promotional activities.

Our collaborative efforts are yielding tangible results. Partners for Life team members now make up about a third of our total donor base — and more are joining all the time.

- Following our adoption, in September 2022, of sexual behaviour-based eligibility screening for blood and plasma donors, we've been working to advance 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.** In the past year we continued collaborating with a leading queer-owned advisory firm to help us engage respectfully and effectively with community members. Our efforts were also guided by our **2SLGBTQIA+ advisory committee**, which includes representatives of several civil society organizations. The committee provided direction on our return to Pride events in the summer of 2023, for the first time in many years. We had booths at Ottawa, London and Calgary Pride celebrations to answer questions about the revised donor screening policy and engage with 2SLGBTQIA+ community members and allies. And throughout the past year, we consulted extensively with community stakeholders as we developed the formal apology that we shared publicly in May 2024 (see next page, "Offering an apology").

Offering an apology

We acknowledge the harms experienced by members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities because of a past donor eligibility policy.

In 2022, Canadian Blood Services was able to end a policy that for decades had prevented all sexually active men who have sex with men, as well as some trans people, from donating blood and plasma. We'd presented Health Canada with a robust body of evidence — built over many years by researchers in Canada and internationally — supporting the conclusion that a policy change was safe and necessary. And in the fall of that year, with Health Canada's approval, we began implementing new eligibility criteria at our donor centres. All prospective blood donors are now asked the same questions about their sexual behaviour, regardless of sexual orientation or gender.

May 2024 marked another important milestone in this long and ongoing journey to make donation more inclusive: Canadian Blood Services issued a **public apology** to 2SLGBTQIA+ communities across Canada, acknowledging the harms experienced by gay, bisexual and queer men, trans people, and other members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities because of the former donor eligibility policy. Dr. Graham Sher, our Chief Executive Officer, personally delivered the apology to members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities during an event at our Ottawa headquarters.

"As an organization, we know that what we do affects the well-being of people and communities across Canada," Dr. Sher said in offering the formal



CEO Dr. Graham Sher delivers Canadian Blood Services' apology to 2SLGBTQIA+ communities on May 10, 2024, during an intimate public event held at our head office in Ottawa.

apology on behalf of the executive management team and the board of directors of Canadian Blood Services. "While the former policy was put in place with the intent to protect patient safety after the Canadian blood system crisis of the 1980s, we recognize that for many years the same policy reinforced a harmful public perception that someone's blood is somehow less safe because of their sexual orientation. We regret that this policy contributed to discrimination, homophobia, transphobia and HIV stigma within society."

The apology was developed in close consultation and collaboration with diverse 2SLGBTQIA+ communities across Canada. Its content was guided by an advisory committee comprising representatives of 2SLGBTQIA+ civil society organizations.

"This is a historic moment that has been made possible by tireless advocacy from community, academia and health professionals," said Michael Kwag, Executive Director of the Community-Based Research Centre and a member of the advisory committee. "Addressing past harms is important, as Canadian Blood Services continues to work toward creating a more inclusive blood system for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in all their diversity. There is still work to be done, but I am encouraged knowing that progress is happening in a collaborative way."

Going forward, Canadian Blood Services has committed to ongoing engagement with 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and to actions aimed at making all policies, processes and interactions with

our organization more inclusive for community members. "We hope that the apology will serve as a foundation," Dr. Sher said, "on which we can build trust and repair relationships. On behalf of Canadian Blood Services, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the many individuals and communities who have worked tirelessly for more than a decade to make participation in **Canada's Lifeline** more inclusive."

Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Canadian Blood Services is committed to forging and sustaining meaningful relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples as we work to fulfill the commitments set out in our **Reconciliation Action Plan**. Building trust is an essential first step in confronting the barriers to inclusion that still exist within our organization — and in health systems across Canada. Only when such barriers are removed will we be able to advance our goal of boosting vital representation from Indigenous communities in our donor and registrant base.

This work has been slowly but steadily progressing over the past year. And as we strive to deepen our collective understanding of reconciliation, we're grateful to the Indigenous Peoples who are guiding our journey.

- **We've been working closely with an Indigenous consultancy, First Peoples Group, seeking expert guidance as we focus on building cultural competence.** A new program called "Reconciliation Office Hours" provides support to all Canadian Blood Services employees with regard to engaging Indigenous communities, Indigenizing spaces and benefiting from curated learning and training opportunities.
- **We also provide one-to-one training to help team members engage responsibly and respectfully with Indigenous Peoples or communities.** In the past year, several groups across the organization have invited Elders and Indigenous facilitators to lead their teams through information workshops, as well as smudging ceremonies and other traditional observances aimed at deepening cultural awareness.

- **The Indigenous Council, formed in 2022, is working to refine its mandate and determine how it can work most productively with Canadian Blood Services.** Defined by members as an "ecosystem of Indigenous thinking and doing," the Council includes representatives from First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities who share a vision of providing "collective intelligence" to guide us in our reconciliation journey. Members held their first in-person meeting at our Ottawa headquarters in September 2023.
- **Employees can access training and resources developed by Indigenous leaders through the reconciliation portal on our intranet.** We also provide content and programming for National Indigenous History Month, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and the Moose Hide Campaign, an Indigenous-led movement to engage men and boys in ending violence toward women and children. As well, in the past year we invited Indigenous speakers to take part in our programs for International Women's Day and Pride Month.
- **In November 2023, we sponsored the annual First Nations Health Managers Association National Conference, held in St. John's.** This was our second year at the three-day event, which brings together several hundred nurses, physicians and other professionals from First Nations communities and health care organizations across Canada. Our Canadian Blood Services team engaged with delegates to gain their insights on Indigenous health care needs and answer questions about our efforts to foster Indigenous representation in our donor and registrant base.



Elder Robert (Bob) Watts, a member of the Bear Clan from the Mohawk and Ojibway Nations and resident of Six Nations Reserve in Ontario, leads a smudge ceremony at a symposium for Canadian Blood Services employee resource group members.

- **Indigenous Peoples are also guiding our efforts to foster equitable access to organ transplantation across Canada.** We recognize that First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, particularly in rural and remote areas, face continued inequities in accessing all dimensions of health care, including organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT). Working to address these inequities while developing a more empathetic understanding of the Indigenous experience is core to our Reconciliation Action Plan.

In that spirit, our OTDT team chose to open its annual meeting in November 2023 by honouring the cultural traditions of Indigenous Peoples. The team invited an Indigenous-run organization to begin the in-person gathering with the KAIROS blanket exercise, an emotionally intense practice that helps non-Indigenous

people better appreciate the profound impacts of colonization. For the OTDT team, the experience was transformative, with members describing a deep-rooted, almost visceral change in their understanding of Indigenous loss. It was a powerful reminder that our efforts to advance OTDT must be grounded in equitable and inclusive relationship building.

Our people and culture

Canadian Blood Services employs 3,750 people with wide-ranging responsibilities and areas of expertise. We're united by a commitment to supporting patients across the country who count on us to help sustain their health.

Our efforts to grow and strengthen **Canada's Lifeline** are underpinned by a set of shared values that define who we are and guide how we work together.

As an employer, we're dedicated to ensuring that everyone in our organization feels respected, connected and valued in their journey with us. The programs, benefits and opportunities we offer are constantly evolving to reflect employees' needs and expectations. But a few foundational principles remain constant:

- We're committed to sustaining an open, collaborative work environment grounded in trust and mutual respect.
- We foster a safe, inclusive workplace that promotes diversity and offers equitable opportunities for all.
- We work together to remove barriers to inclusion and address systemic racism.
- We want people to feel engaged with their work, motivated to fulfill their roles and appreciated for their unique contributions.
- We listen to and act upon the feedback of our employees, involving them in the future we're building together.





People across our large, complex organization have a diverse array of skills, expertise, lived experiences and responsibilities. What unites us is our commitment to supporting health systems and improving the lives of patients.

Build a more diverse and inclusive organization

In 2023–2024, more than 2,500 employees responded to our most recent survey on self-identity and experiences of inclusion at Canadian Blood Services. Employees shared how they self-identify in terms of race and/or ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender and other categories, and whether they have any visible or invisible disabilities. The wealth of data is also helping us better understand how people’s experience varies in different divisions and regions, in unionized versus non-unionized positions, in roles with in-person or hybrid work arrangements, and relative to their years of tenure.

While individual survey responses were varied, we can draw conclusions about the overall progress of our efforts to advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). This analysis will help us further strengthen and focus internal DEI initiatives as each division sets goals for 2024–2025 and beyond.

Here are findings in four key areas and examples of the ongoing work they reflect:

Gender

Employees who identify as women or additional genders comprise 70 per cent of our current workforce. Within this group, nearly 63 per cent are managers or supervisors, while 53.5 per cent are leaders at the associate director, director or executive levels.

Canadian Blood Services has committed to the federal government’s 50 – 30 Challenge, which aims for gender parity in senior leadership and board positions (50 per cent women and/or non-binary people) and 30 per cent representation of underrepresented groups. The latter include employees who identify as Racialized, Black and/or People of Colour (“visible

minorities”), people with disabilities (including invisible and episodic disabilities), 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or gender and sexually diverse individuals, and Aboriginal and/or Indigenous Peoples.

What we’ve been doing: We established the Women’s Empowerment Network in late 2022. Representing nearly 250 self-identifying women and non-binary employees, the network promotes gender equality and equity in the workplace. As well, the 2SLGBTQIA+ employee resource group strongly supports gender and sexual diversity initiatives across Canadian Blood Services. These initiatives create spaces to learn about and discuss issues related to the experiences of women and non-binary employees in the workplace.

Race and ethnicity

Employees who identify as Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian and/or People of Colour make up about 30 per cent of our workforce. The proportion of racialized employees is 28 per cent for manager and supervisor roles, and 20 per cent at executive, director and associate director levels.

What we’ve been doing: We’ve launched the first phase of a comprehensive review to identify possible discrimination and unconscious bias within our policies and processes — guided by a consultant with expertise in this area. We’ve taken steps in recent years to make our hiring policies and practices more inclusive and bias-free. The Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) employee resource group offers a safe space for sharing experiences and providing guidance on organizational change.

Disability and mental health

The inclusion survey results indicate that Canadian Blood Services has continued to evolve in the important areas of disability and mental health. Our focus remains on destigmatization and normalizing conversations while ensuring that wellness supports are in line with what employees want and need. Underpinning these efforts is a shared sense of pride in the many identities and lived experiences that make up our diverse workforce.

What we've been doing: We believe that respondents' openness on the topic of disability reflects our work to increase inclusion for people with disabilities across Canadian Blood Services, including our support for an employee resource group devoted to awareness of visible and invisible disabilities (AVID).

Ensuring the accessibility of our workspaces continues to be a top priority. Our facilities team has led the adoption of universal design principles at all locations in our physical network, investing in more accessible parking, providing elevator access in multi-storey buildings, creating wider walkways and ensuring more accessible washrooms (many of which are also gender-neutral). In October, we mark Disability Employment Awareness Month with activities and events developed in collaboration with the AVID group. In the coming year, we'll introduce new training, discussion forums and other initiatives designed to increase awareness of disabilities and the need for accessibility.

In the realm of mental health, the pandemic heightened awareness of the need for more robust and equitable supports. We provide a variety of employee wellness offerings aimed at decreasing stigma and promoting conversations around mental health. These include the Employee and Family Assistance Program; wellness apps and platforms; drop-in virtual therapy; mental health training for people leaders; and a new peer support network. (For more details, please see "Foster personal growth and professional development," page 28.)

The results of the inclusion survey have been shared and discussed with the Canadian Blood Services executive management team, our board of directors, and leaders and employees across the organization, as well as employee resource groups (ERGs). Guided by the insights gained from employees' responses, the survey team has been meeting with each division about efforts currently underway to advance inclusion. Going forward, the team will be working with divisional leaders to develop new inclusion goals and align efforts across the organization.

Employee Inclusion Survey Results

The table at right presents selected highlights from our organization-wide inclusion survey, to which 71 per cent of Canadian Blood Services employees responded, sharing basic demographic information and indicating how they self-identify. The values shown represent the percentage of survey participants who said they belonged to any of four identity categories. We've highlighted these categories because they align with our organization's DEI priorities related to fostering gender equality and equity; promoting racial or ethnic diversity and addressing systemic racism; advancing 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion; and fostering reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Many respondents identified with multiple categories.

- **As employee resource groups continue to grow, we've formalized a structure designed to give members greater autonomy and influence.** ERGs are created by and for employees, offering opportunities to connect with colleagues who share identities or lived experiences, and to join forces in building a greater sense of belonging at Canadian Blood Services. The groups inform and contribute to DEI initiatives and share their insights and expectations with organizational leaders working to effect change. Supported by our DEI team, ERGs organize events, speaker series and other initiatives. We provide each ERG with professional development opportunities, as well as funding for events and activities. ERGs also play a key role in planning and supporting the cultural and diversity days and months that we celebrate as an organization.

	Women and additional genders	Racial or ethnic identity	2SLGBTQIA+	Indigenous
Entire employee population	70.0%	29.9%		
Executives, directors, associate directors	53.5%	19.5%	12.7%	4.4%
Managers, supervisors	62.7%	27.9%		
Individual contributors	75.5%	31.9%		

- 2SLGBTQIA+ is an acronym that stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex and Asexual. The plus sign indicates all other sexual orientations and gender identities not explicitly included in the acronym. There are many other acronyms that may be preferred by some individuals.
- Categories of race, ethnicity and Indigeneity in the survey included: Asian, Black, Middle Eastern, Latin/Hispanic, Jewish, mixed race and Indigenous. We also provided options to select "other" or "prefer not to answer".
- Where 10 or more employees identified with a category, percentages are reported at the job level. Where there were fewer than 10 responses, the percentage is instead reported against the total employee population.
- The board of directors did not complete the survey; members' representation data was collected during board recruitment.
- The employee inclusion survey was conducted by an external consultancy. The next survey is scheduled for 2025–2026.

- In the spring of 2024, employees from coast to coast to coast came together, with their leaders' support, for our first ERG Symposium.** Gathering in Vaughan, Ontario, about 40 participants from various divisions and teams — many meeting in person for the first time — spent the professional development day connecting, learning, sharing insights and collaborating on efforts to foster diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and reconciliation across our organization. The event began with opening remarks and a smudging ceremony led by Elder Bob Watts, a member of the Bear Clan of the Mohawk and Ojibway Nations and the former interim executive director of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The sessions that followed were designed to support ERG members in influencing and advocating for change as they work to make the employee experience more inclusive at Canadian Blood Services.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

- 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex and Asexual, plus all other sexual orientations and gender identities)
- BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour)
- AVID (Awareness of Visible and Invisible Disabilities)

(For more on the symposium, please see "Fostering inclusion" in our annual report.)

- We've integrated DEI commitments into all relevant areas of corporate strategy, underlining our collective responsibility to advance more inclusive policies and processes.** Our dedicated DEI team, guided by the vice-president, inclusion, sustainability and engagement — a newly created executive role — works alongside colleagues in communications, employee experience, stakeholder engagement, organizational change and other administrative and operational teams.
- We provide organizational leaders with DEI-related training on how to recognize and overcome implicit and unconscious bias in decision-making and actions.** This is part of a broader learning program aimed at fostering inclusion, building cultural competence and advancing allyship across Canadian Blood Services. Over the past year, we continued to deliver mandatory DEI training to all employees. Many also participated in workshops, events and speaker series on topics such as advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, the experiences of Black communities in health care systems, gender equity, 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion, disability inclusion and intersectionality.



Employees from coast to coast to coast came together for Canadian Blood Services' first-ever employee resource group symposium.

- We celebrate many diversity and cultural awareness events that reinforce our support for racialized, Indigenous and equity-deserving communities.** As an organization, we recognize Pride Month, Black History Month, International Women's Day, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and Disability Employment Awareness Month, with guidance and input from our employee resource groups. In our planning and communications for these events, we take an intersectional approach to programming, content development, education and training, with a broad focus on increasing cultural competence and advancing allyship. We also encourage employees to recognize other diversity and cultural awareness days that are meaningful to them.

During Pride Month in June 2023, we raised the Progress Pride flag at our Ottawa headquarters for the first time. We also issued a **statement of solidarity** with 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, following an increase in cases of violence and injustice, particularly against trans and gender diverse people. And guided by the 2SLGBTQIA+ advisory committee, we returned to Pride events in Ottawa, London and Calgary after many years, engaging with community members on questions around donor eligibility and inclusion.

Protect and promote employees' health and well-being

People across our large, complex organization have a diverse array of skills, expertise, lived experiences and responsibilities. What unites us is our commitment to supporting health systems and improving the lives of patients.

In the same spirit, we're committed to sustaining the health and well-being of everyone who works here — to keep our culture strong and attract other dedicated, capable people to join the team.

- Drawing on our collective experience of the pandemic, we're more focused than ever on promoting and strengthening mental well-being in the workplace.** Within our extensive offering of employee programs, we can showcase three that exemplify our commitment to fostering shared awareness, open dialogue and mutual support:
 - The Peer Support Network**, introduced in 2023–2024, invites employees who are encountering mental health challenges to connect with a peer in the organization who understands the potential pain points and can direct them to appropriate sources of help, including those that are part of our benefits offering.
 - Bright Breaks**, also launched in 2023–2024, are short, restorative wellness sessions that employees can access easily when it's most convenient for them. The program has something for everyone, from mindfulness and breathing, to stretching and movement, to learning and reflection — all tailored to fit employees' busy calendars.

- The Well-being Champion Network** raises awareness of all the wellness programs and opportunities available to Canadian Blood Services employees. More than 40 champions advise their peers on how to get maximum benefit from what we offer — and also how they can be part of program planning and delivery.

(For more on these three programs, please see "Looking out for one another" in our annual report.)
- We offer mental health first aid training to people leaders in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada.** Participants learn how to support colleagues in crisis — and when to reach out pre-emptively to those who may be struggling — while gaining tools to better understand and address their own challenges. We also offer resilience coaching to help organizational leaders proactively manage their personal well-being.
- We foster employees' physical health through a range of programs, focusing particularly on the value of prevention.** We also partner with external providers to offer flu vaccination clinics, as well as webinars, videos and in-person workshops on topics such as nutrition, disease prevention and adopting healthier routines.



Renee, employee, using one of Canadian Blood Services' wellness app offerings.

- We now provide free menstrual products in all washrooms at our donor centres, mobile events and production and administration facilities.** Employees, volunteers, donors and visitors to our workplaces can count on easy access to these essential items.
- We've launched a webinar series to support employees who are personally caring for loved ones, whether children or adults.** We recognize that balancing a caregiver's responsibilities with the demands of work can be very challenging. These webinars combine expert insights with the perspectives of peers to help people manage every kind of caring relationship. They may be supporting children with disabilities or who require tailored assistance, supporting teens with mental health needs, looking after partners experiencing illness, or caring for aging family members.
- The health and safety of our own workforce is critically important to ensuring the effectiveness of Canada's Lifeline.** We take all reasonable steps to create and maintain a healthy and secure workplace for every Canadian Blood Services employee.
- Historically, we provided a defined benefit plan and a defined contribution plan for eligible employees.** However, after a comprehensive review of the two plans, we've concluded that the defined contribution plan will be terminated in February 2025. All employees in the plan will be enrolled in the defined benefit plan, which provides more secure and predictable retirement income regardless of economic and market conditions.

Foster personal growth and professional development

There is a wealth of potential in our organization. We want to ensure that all employees have equal and equitable opportunities to build on their accomplishments and expand their knowledge and skills, both personally and professionally.

To support their development journey, we provide education, resources and guidance to help employees discover their strengths, identify growth areas and build meaningful, empowering careers at Canadian Blood Services.

- We help employees develop the skills required to achieve our mission — and build their careers — in a culture of inclusion, collaboration and mutual support.** A key priority of our new strategic plan is developing the necessary capabilities across our workforce to meet current goals and pursue future challenges. We also recognize that in a competitive talent marketplace, opportunities for career development are vital for deepening employee engagement and retention. From the time a new employee joins Canadian Blood Services, we offer a range of development programs — because we know that the success of our mission depends on the people who work each day to bring it to life. Our development programs and resources include:
 - LinkedIn Learning: an evolving array of 16,000+ on-demand courses designed to support employees' current and future roles
 - Aspiring Leaders: a program designed to help employees who've not yet managed people or teams decide if they wish to seek leadership opportunities
 - The Peter MacDonald Leading with Head and Heart Program for Supervisors and Managers, developed with Ivey Business School to build holistic management skills
 - INSEAD's Developing Emerging Leaders: a program offered by this top-ranked business school to help our directors and associate directors enhance and sharpen their leadership skills.
 - A career development toolkit, conversation guides and individualized development plans — all supported by regular workshops.

(For more on development programs, see "Learning to change" in our annual report.)

From the time a new employee joins Canadian Blood Services, we offer a range of development programs — because we know that the success of our mission depends on the people who work each day to bring it to life.



Create the flexible, supportive work environment of tomorrow

The key to planning for the workplace of the future is balancing employee expectations with organizational priorities. We recognize that Canadian Blood Services employees have many roles outside work, and we understand the importance of providing the flexibility they need to balance the various dimensions of their lives.

- We're working to better understand and address the experiences of frontline employees in collection, production, testing and transportation roles.** Representing most of our total workforce, these employees worked throughout the pandemic at collection events, in our manufacturing and testing facilities, and distributing products to hospitals. As part of our new strategic plan, we're focused on improving the frontline experience and have launched a discovery project to hear directly from employees on specific changes that would have an impact on their overall engagement.
- In 2023, we asked employees with hybrid work arrangements to increase their in-person presence to at least 40 per cent of their total time on the job.** For most full-time employees, this translates into a minimum of two days each week on-site at a Canadian Blood Services facility or other location related to their roles. The intent behind this decision is rooted in our mission as **Canada's Lifeline** and, more fundamentally, our belief in the power of human connection. We believe that being physically present in the same space inspires and empowers people to engage more meaningfully, to communicate more clearly, to solve problems more effectively and to celebrate achievements together. Going forward, we expect that closer social connection and in-person collaboration will lead to concrete gains in continuous improvement, innovation and other long-term drivers of excellence. And this in turn will ensure we continue to deliver the safe, reliable, high-quality products and services that patients and health care providers across Canada depend on.



Canadian Blood Services employees in Barrie, Ontario

- In the fall of 2023, we introduced the Employee Anniversary Survey, a new mechanism for gathering feedback from our workforce throughout the year.** The survey is emailed to each employee on the anniversary of their hiring date, along with a congratulatory message thanking them for their contributions. Questions address their overall experience at Canadian Blood Services, including their level of engagement and sense of inclusion. The survey also invites employees to share their views on developments in the organization that have inspired them, as well as further changes they'd like to see. By providing a steady stream of feedback year-round, the survey allows us to better monitor shifts in employees' perspectives and identify new ways to improve their experience. By year-end, over 600 employees had responded to their anniversary surveys. We look forward to hearing from many more in the future.
- In 2023–2024, we conducted a comprehensive review of our onboarding program, identifying what was working and what could be enhanced.** Leveraging current employees' feedback about their experiences in joining Canadian Blood Services, we've developed a new onboarding program for all employees, along with a complementary program for people leaders. Our holistic approach aims to build stronger connections to **Canada's Lifeline** by deepening new hires' appreciation of our work and its impact, and by providing practical knowledge that will help them become effective and confident in their roles.

We're focused on improving the frontline experience by hearing directly from employees on specific changes that impact their work environment.

Environment

As a biologics manufacturer and a provider of products and services to health systems across Canada, we're keenly aware of the environmental impacts of our operations. And on a broader level, we share our stakeholders' sense of stewardship toward a planet increasingly threatened by climate change. We therefore focus our environmental efforts on mitigation, particularly by reducing carbon emissions, and on strengthening our organization's resilience in the face of climate-related impacts. At the same time, we're adopting more responsible approaches to waste management, the procurement of sustainable materials and water use.



Developing a comprehensive environmental strategy

We've been measuring the carbon footprint of Canadian Blood Services for the past decade. Eight years ago, we introduced an environmental policy that formalized our commitment to address current and future impacts. In 2023, we designed our carbon inventory management plan. And in the spring of 2024, supported by a sustainability consultancy, we began developing a comprehensive environmental strategy that will more clearly align our ongoing initiatives and provide a roadmap for the future.

Setting the context

- **In Canada, the health sector is responsible for about five per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions.*** The largest contributors to energy consumption across the sector are facility operations, including lighting, heat, air conditioning, IT and medical technologies; production of medical products, as well as their safe disposal; and transportation of medical products and supplies. Health organizations must dramatically reduce emissions in all these areas to meet their own sustainability goals and align with national carbon reduction targets.
- **Within this broader context, climate change poses specific risks to the blood supply system.** Extreme weather can disrupt donation activities, damage production facilities, hamper logistics and lead to product shortages. At the same time, shifts in temperature patterns may extend the reach of blood-borne diseases carried by mosquitoes, other insects and ticks, potentially putting the blood supply at risk. *(For more on how we address these challenges as part of our overall approach to*

evaluating operational risks, please see “Managing various dimensions of risk,” page 44.)

- **Across the Canadian Blood Services network, climate risks vary from region to region.** To address potential disruptions from weather events, we've created local response teams to help ensure we can continue meeting patient and health system needs without compromising product safety or quality. We coordinate these efforts nationally, so multi-function teams from other locations can move quickly to help minimize service interruptions.
- **Geography also affects how we enhance and expand our network.** For example, if a proposed production or collection site is in an area prone to threats such as flooding or wildfires, we must weigh that risk against the need to maintain prompt, uninterrupted deliveries to hospitals and/or easy access for donors. Also, if climate-related risks have intensified since a facility was originally developed, we may need to retrofit the site with added protection or resilience measures. Sustaining operational resilience in the face of climate change is integral to our infrastructure management and long-term planning.



Mechanical room at the Canadian Blood Services facility in Calgary

- **We're adopting better ways to manage the waste we produce.** We're also seeking alternatives that will significantly reduce our overall waste output. According to the World Health Organization, 85 per cent of waste related to health care is not hazardous.[†] But because the supplies required for treating patients are often single use, waste reduction can be a challenge. While Canadian Blood Services produces comparatively less waste than manufacturers in general, we're committed to minimizing, where possible, the amount of our waste that ends up in landfill.
- **As for water use, the health sector historically has required large volumes of this finite resource.** Outmoded and inefficient systems put needless strain on freshwater resources and consume more energy in the treatment of wastewater. Moreover, unnecessary water use, whether because of aging infrastructure or obsolete processes, contributes

to higher costs. At Canadian Blood Services, we've begun re-examining water use across our operations. And as with waste management, we have the advantage of requiring lower volumes overall relative to similar organizations in our sector and compared to product manufacturers generally.

- **Our environmental strategy must also address the risks that come with transitioning to a low-carbon economy.** These transition risks can include higher operating costs from carbon taxes, insurance premiums and investments in new technologies. In addition, we need to be prepared for changes in regulations and government policy affecting how we operate. And we must address growing concerns from communities, advocacy groups and our own employees regarding our climate response.

^{*}Mobilizing Public Health Action on Climate Change in Canada

[†]WHO fact sheet on health care waste

How we'll build our strategy

- **To begin building the foundation of our strategy, in 2023–2024 we set out to define the current state of environmental sustainability at Canadian Blood Services.** We examined ongoing initiatives via stakeholder interviews and analysis of documentation. We conducted a scan of all jurisdictions in which we operate, determining the expectations of our health system partners, regulators and governments. And we benchmarked our performance against best practices in the health sector and the biologics industry.
- **Going forward, we'll be bringing together stakeholders from across the organization to help design our new environmental strategy.** We'll establish the key pillars, along with high-level goals and timelines for the areas where we plan to focus our efforts. And from there we'll prioritize initiatives, set targets and assign responsibilities — while ensuring alignment with our broader sustainability framework and the corporate strategic plan.

Our primary areas of focus

Climate change

- We will mitigate climate-related impacts by working to reduce carbon emissions. In our buildings, which account for about 75 per cent of our calculated footprint, we'll continue reducing energy consumption by switching to lower-carbon sources and investing in more efficient technologies. Across the organization, we'll introduce operational efficiencies aimed at reducing both emissions and costs. We'll also empower employees to consider climate-related impacts in making more informed decisions.

- At the same time, we'll strengthen our operational resilience as climate impacts intensify. This means assessing longer-term climate-related risks and exploring new technologies designed to enhance and sustain business continuity.

Sustainable materials and waste management

- **We will source more sustainable materials to reduce our environmental impacts.** This starts with prioritizing products that are recycled and/or have extended lifespans. We'll invest in innovation efforts to develop more energy-efficient products and equipment — again, lowering emissions while reducing costs. We'll also adjust our procurement policies, favouring suppliers with comprehensive sustainability practices to further reduce risk while strengthening relationships along our supply chain.
- **We will implement more sustainable strategies to effectively handle, process and dispose of all waste types.** Our waste reduction strategies will take into account current industry standards and regulations.

Water management

- We will consume, conserve and monitor our water resources more efficiently. This includes adopting reduction strategies such as low-flow fixtures, leak detection and repair, and educating employees on water-saving behaviours.



Charging stations for electric vehicles at our facility in Brampton, Ontario

What happens next

As this sustainability report was in production, the team responsible for developing our environmental strategy met to review work to date, share findings and insights, and map out a clear path forward. We expect to finalize and formally adopt the new strategy in 2024–2025 and will provide updates in next year's sustainability report on its implementation and the many initiatives it is expected to spark.

While adopting a comprehensive environmental strategy is an important milestone for Canadian Blood Services, we recognize that our response to climate change will be a long-term, multifaceted evolution. Over the coming years, we'll continue maturing our approach to addressing the risks — and embracing the opportunities — of a challenge that affects all our stakeholders and indeed the entire planet.

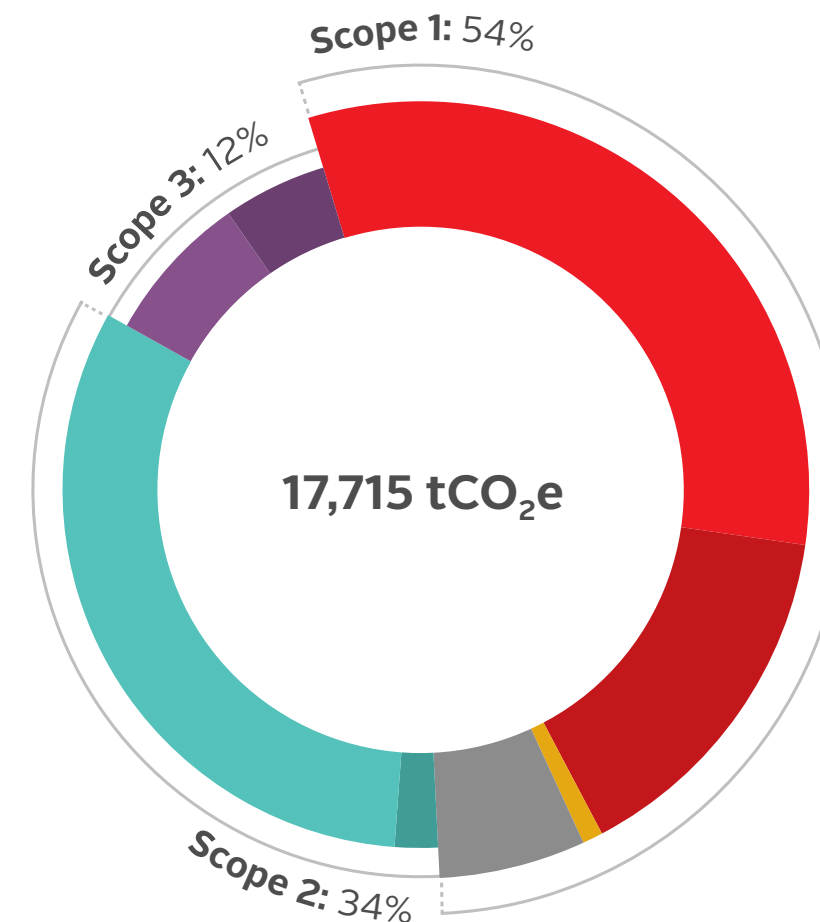
We continue exploring additional ways to reduce carbon emissions across our physical network, recognizing that the greatest opportunities for progress are at sites that we own and operate.

Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts

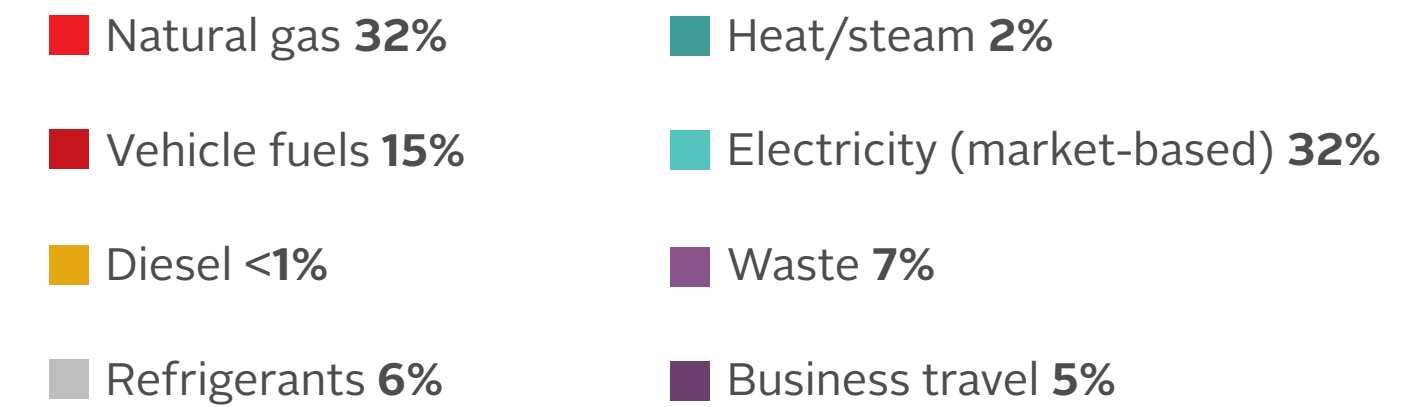
As a prominent national organization and an essential part of the country’s health care infrastructure, Canadian Blood Services has a responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions without compromising the safety or quality of our products and services. This means we must be constantly gaining deeper insights into our emission sources and their environmental impacts — and then seeking opportunities for improvement that do not affect quality and safety.

Since 2019–2020, our carbon emissions from all sources have been reduced by 14 per cent. This can be attributed to a range of factors, including the continued greening of the national electricity grid, a decrease in employees’ business travel during the pandemic, reduced energy consumption in heating and cooling our facilities, and lower fuel usage across our vehicle fleet.

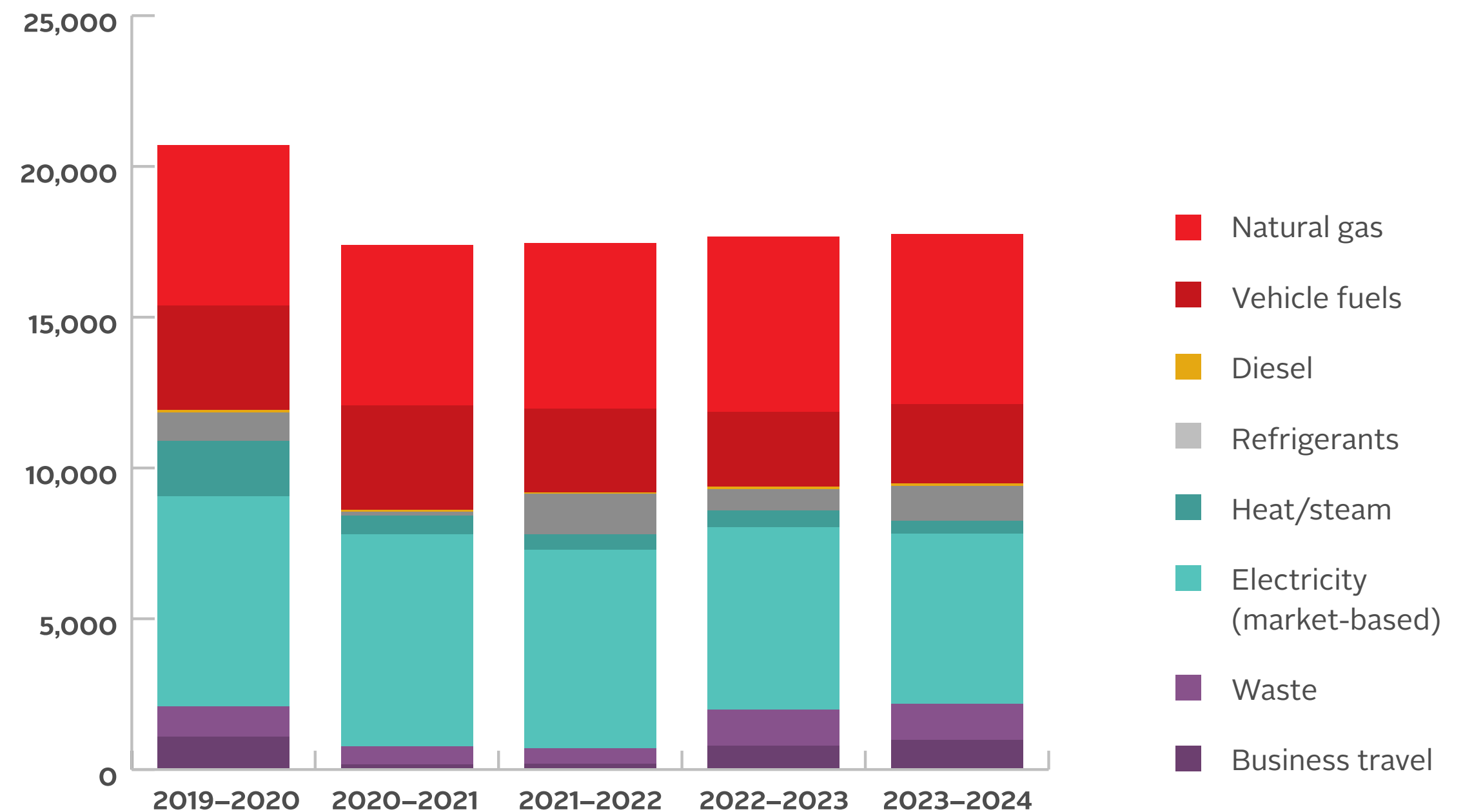
We continue exploring additional ways to reduce carbon emissions across our physical network, recognizing that the greatest opportunities for progress are at sites that we own and operate. Total energy consumption for all Canadian Blood Services locations remained more or less unchanged in 2023–2024 compared to the prior year (see GRI disclosure 302-1, page 53). We maintained this stability while expanding our total facilities network to 56 sites, including the addition of two new plasma donor centres and the conversion of one existing location into a plasma centre.



2023–2024 Emissions



Emission sources (tCO₂e)



Carbon emissions at Canadian Blood Services

Emission sources in metric tonnes of CO ₂ equivalents (tCO ₂ e)	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024	
Scope 1 – Emissions associated with direct operations	Natural gas	5,310	5,320	5,491	5,795	5,629
	Vehicle fuels	3,469	2,994	2,766	2,480	2,650
	Diesel	84	60	52	87	76
	Refrigerants	928	136	1,333	692	1,147
	Total Scope 1 emissions	9,791	8,510	9,642	9,054	9,502
Scope 2 – Emissions associated with the generation of electricity, heating and cooling, or steam purchased for our own consumption	Heat/steam	1,849	611	531	559	423
	Electricity (location-based)	7,160	7,285	6,766	6,398	6,730
	Electricity (market-based)	6,968	7,039	6,563	6,058	5,643
	Total Scope 2 emissions (market-based)	8,817	7,650	7,094	6,617	6,066
Scope 3 – Indirect emissions other than those covered in Scope 2	Waste	989	587	523	1,192	1,209
	Business travel	1,061	137	155	751	938
	Total Scope 3 emissions	2,050	724	678	1,943	2,147
Total (market-based)	20,658	16,884	17,414	17,614	17,715	
Reduction in total emissions compared to 2019–2020	-	(18%)	(16%)	(15%)	(14%)	

- Figures in the graphs and chart above represent emissions deemed to be within the operational control of Canadian Blood Services. We use the **Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol** to calculate Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions. This approach helps ensure that the assessment of our carbon footprint is complete, accurate, consistent, transparent and relevant. Where data was not available as this report was being prepared, we have made estimates.

- Our carbon footprint calculation is based on emission factors provided by several organizations, including Environment and Climate Change Canada, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and our utility providers.
- Scope 3 emissions are limited to two categories: waste and business-related travel. Going forward, we'll continue to expand our insights into other Scope 3 categories.
- Percentage values have been rounded.

What our emissions data reveals

Our progress to date in reducing and mitigating environmental impacts is reflected in our latest emissions metrics. Based on data we've collected comparing year-over-year and multi-year performance (captured in the graphs and table on this page), three areas in particular are worth highlighting:

- **Business travel by Canadian Blood Services employees increased in 2023–2024.** However, it remains below pre-pandemic levels. As we develop our environmental strategy (see page 31), we're evaluating how we prioritize business travel, balancing the importance of in-person collaboration and team building against the need to continue reducing our overall footprint.
- **Key changes in energy-related emissions:**
 - Emissions from **natural gas** decreased by 166 tCO₂e in the past year compared to 2022–2023. Based on our initial analysis, this may be attributable to efficiency improvements and/or changes in energy sources.
 - Emissions from **steam** declined by 136 tCO₂e, a significant improvement over the previous year. This could be due to operational changes and/or technology upgrades.
 - Emissions from **market-based electricity** decreased by 415 tCO₂e compared to the previous reporting period. This reduction may be attributed to lighting upgrades and more efficient building operations.
- **We saw a material increase in refrigerant-related emissions during the past year.** This was primarily from the replacement of refrigeration equipment at some of our production facilities to maintain operational efficiency and protect against future leaks. We continue to monitor our facilities with our leak detection systems, and all environmental incidents related to refrigerant loss are investigated and reported.

Other priority areas for lowering emissions

To achieve our carbon-reduction goals, we're pursuing a range of initiatives focused on our physical facilities, equipment and vehicle fleet.

- **Efficient buildings:** We continue to adopt “smart building” principles at sites with higher energy use, aiming to lower consumption of electricity and natural gas. Most of our facilities now have LED lighting installed. By upgrading lighting, we not only save energy costs but also benefit from higher-quality illumination and extended equipment lifespans.
- **Roof insulation assessments:** During the past year, we conducted thorough examinations of roof insulation at several Canadian Blood Services facilities across the country. By improving this structural element, we can enhance thermal efficiency, reduce heat loss and help ensure a more sustainable building envelope.
- **Equipment improvements:** As major systems and equipment — including HVAC, hot water, air handlers and chillers, as well as fridges and freezers used for product storage — near the end of their life cycles, we're replacing them with more efficient alternatives.
- **On-site renewable energy:** In 2023–2024, our Calgary facility generated 581,020 kWh of electricity from its rooftop solar PV system — equivalent to 276 tCO₂e of avoided GHG emissions — which is helping advance our sustainability goals by lowering our overall carbon footprint.

- **Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations:** In 2023–2024, we further expanded our EV charging network, adding nine new stations with dual-port options at our administrative and production facilities in Ottawa and Brampton. Encouraging the use of EVs (including plug-in hybrids) reinforces our sustainability goals not only by helping reduce carbon emissions but by supporting the broader adoption of EVs in Canada. Providing workplace charging helps our employees travel more efficiently and sustainably — and it's an attractive advantage as we recruit new team members.
- **Vehicle fleet telematics:** In 2021–2022, we elected to implement telematics across the entire Canadian Blood Services fleet. We're already seeing positive improvements in both driver experience and fleet management metrics. Fuel consumption has been trending downward over the past five years. We're evaluating the data to determine whether idling time is going down as well. And we're working with our drivers across the country to adopt behaviours that will further improve fuel-efficiency.



Inside the plasma donor centre in St. Catharines, Ontario

Photo by Tia Winters.

During the past year, we gave added support to our employee-led green teams, helping extend their impact across Canadian Blood Services.



Adriana and Roula, employees, take part in a plant exchange at our head office in Ottawa.

Empower participants in Canada’s Lifeline to adopt sustainable practices

Achieving our mission as **Canada’s Lifeline** depends on the contributions of everyone who works to ensure our products and services reach the patients who need them. The same sense of shared purpose — among our employees, as well as external stakeholders — drives our efforts to advance environmental sustainability.

Our materiality assessment revealed that Canadian Blood Services employees feel strongly about protecting the environment and addressing the impacts of climate change. Their insights and perspectives are reflected in the actions we take as an organization to advance sustainability. We’re equipping employees with tools and resources to help reduce our environmental impacts. And we’ve begun creating opportunities for everyone to participate in advancing sustainability initiatives. This collective effort is already making a difference.

At the same time, we invite stakeholders outside the organization — including donors, suppliers, hospital customers and peer organizations — to join in our climate change initiatives. We encourage them to make environmentally responsible decisions as they support our operations and contribute to our supply chain. Of course, this will be a long-term undertaking, but we look forward to working together to make a difference.

- **During the past year, we gave added support to our employee-led green teams, helping extend their impact across Canadian Blood Services.** By fostering the teams’ grassroots sustainability efforts, we aim to further reduce the environmental impacts of day-to-day activities at locations across the country. Green team members also contribute

to data gathering efforts that inform both our sustainability reporting and the development of new initiatives.

- **We continue to work alongside many of our hospital customers and health system partners in the Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care.** Organizations in this national alliance must manage many of the same environmental impacts, both from the waste generated by our operations and from specific products and equipment we depend on. Through sharing ideas, best practices and successful outcomes, we help the entire sector evolve more sustainable health service delivery.
- **We also remain active in various sustainability initiatives of the international Alliance of Blood Operators.** We meet regularly with our peers around the globe to share progress reports and lessons learned, and to collaborate on projects aimed at improving how we manage the environmental impacts of blood systems.

Managing waste

To protect the environment and help keep everyone who interacts with our organization safe, Canadian Blood Services is developing a comprehensive waste management plan.

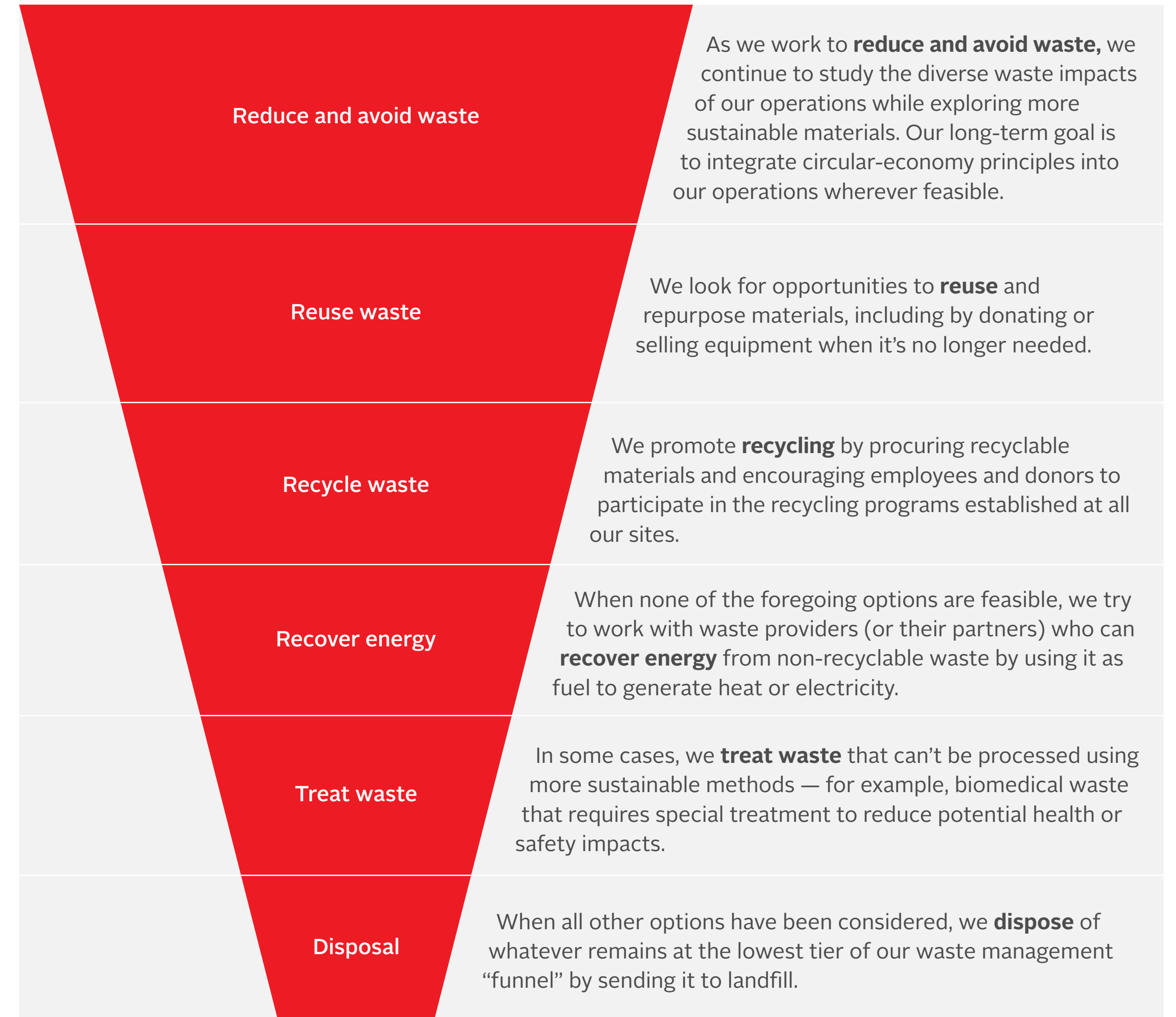
Many of our frontline employees are trained in the proper handling and disposal of biomedical waste. And as we continue to investigate potential environmental impacts in this area, we're also working to source more sustainable materials. Our ultimate goal is to integrate circular-economy principles wherever feasible across all areas of our operations.

- **The biomedical and pharmaceutical waste produced by our operations requires highly specialized handling.** We work with regulated providers to ensure safe and secure disposal of all such materials. For example, we collect sharps (hypodermic needles and other devices that can puncture or cut skin) in sterilized, reusable disposal containers at all our facilities. Some biomedical waste is incinerated or autoclaved (heated under high pressure) and then sent either to a waste-to-energy facility or a secure landfill, following best practices in this highly regulated area of disposal.
- **The pandemic's many environmental impacts included a new recycling challenge: how to dispose of disposable masks.** To manage this waste stream, we installed mask-recycling boxes at our facilities and encouraged employees, donors, volunteers and other partners to dispose of their masks safely and responsibly. Since 2020, our providers have processed approximately 2,100 kg of masks, which are recycled into useful products such

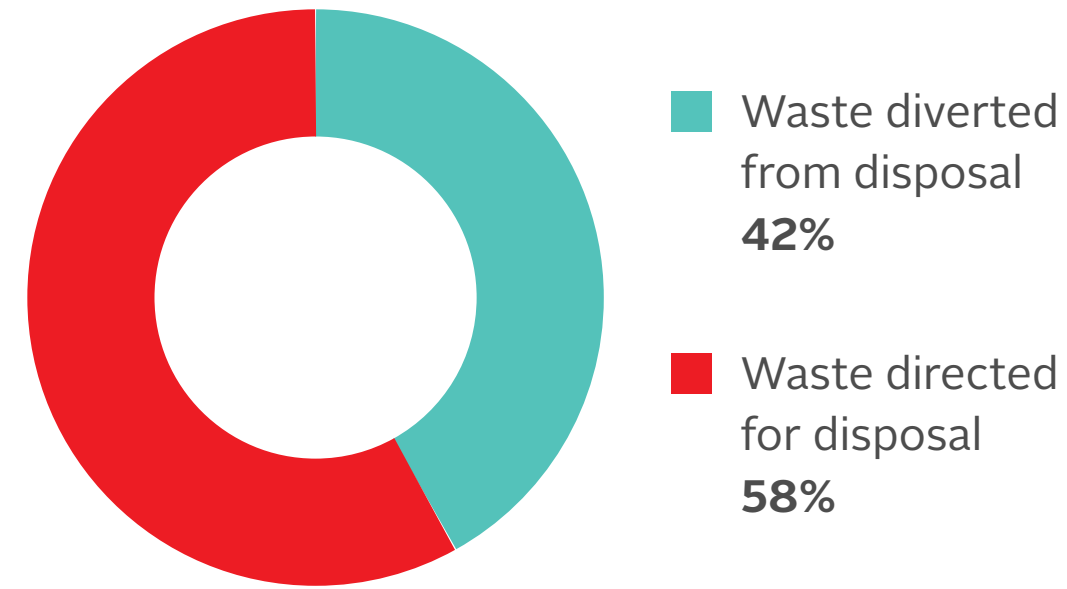
as plastic furniture and decking. In 2023–2024, we worked with a waste service provider to implement a broader recycling program for all personal protective equipment (PPE) used at our facilities — substantially increasing the volume of such waste we're able to divert from landfill.

- **We're empowering employees to make better-informed decisions when it comes to managing waste.** We provide encouragement through various channels, including our green team network, to suggest ways of further reducing waste across our operations. We've installed signage at all our facilities alerting employees, donors, volunteers and other visitors of our waste management practices. Our workplaces also have programs for processing confidential paper documents, as well as hazardous or hard-to-recycle items such as batteries, printer cartridges and electronic components.
- **To address the unique waste streams at our various facilities across the country, we've adopted a hierarchical waste management approach.** Our multi-tiered plan reflects the complex waste management realities and diverse recycling requirements of the various jurisdictions where we operate. In each region, we work with our waste removal and haulage contractors to ensure they share our long-term commitment to responsible and sustainable diversion.

Our hierarchical waste management model



2023–2024 waste metrics



Using sustainable materials wherever we can

We evaluate the sustainability of many products and materials that we procure for facilities construction and redevelopment, as well as for use in our daily operations. But while this is a priority for us, as it is for our stakeholders, we also must uphold the rigorous standards that are expected of a national blood system operator and a provider of vital, often lifesaving products and services to the country's health systems. There are contexts in which ensuring quality and safety must take precedence over the environmental benefits of reusable materials.

- **Each of the extra-durable containers we use for blood shipments was reused, on average, 28 times in the past year.** We began replacing our standard cardboard shipping boxes with reusable alternatives nearly a decade ago. Today, our most widely used container for shipping products to hospitals has an outer shell that can be reused hundreds of times and a polyurethane insert with a recommended 10-year replacement cycle. We encourage our logistics teams to clean and repair boxes that are still usable, and we're constantly seeking other ways to extend the life of shipping materials.

- **To encourage even greater use of refillable personal water containers in our facilities, we promote the Bring Your Own Bottle program at all refill stations.** Over the past year, this initiative has inspired growing numbers of employees, donors, volunteers and other visitors to arrive at our sites with containers from home. We no longer hand out single-use plastic water bottles at our plasma donor centres, and we expect to discontinue their use across our collection network as the Bring Your Own Bottle program continues to gain support.
- **The Canadian Blood Services pins we present to donors and employees are now produced using more sustainable methods.** The manufacturer, which supplied us with nearly 80,000 pins last year, has adopted more responsible production practices across its operations to minimize environmental impact. All pins are made in Canada from lead-free zinc, and all excess metal from the casts is recovered and melted back down for use in additional pins, among other products.

Responsibly managing our water use

The production of blood products, compared to other types of manufacturing, doesn't require large amounts of water. Still, we're committed to responsibly managing what we do use. We're currently able to measure water volumes at about a third of Canadian Blood Services locations, which together comprise roughly three quarters of our total physical footprint. In 2023–2024, we drew approximately 66 megalitres across our network. We're installing low-flow fixtures to ensure responsible usage wherever possible. And going forward, we'll continue exploring opportunities to further reduce the amount of water we use in our operations.

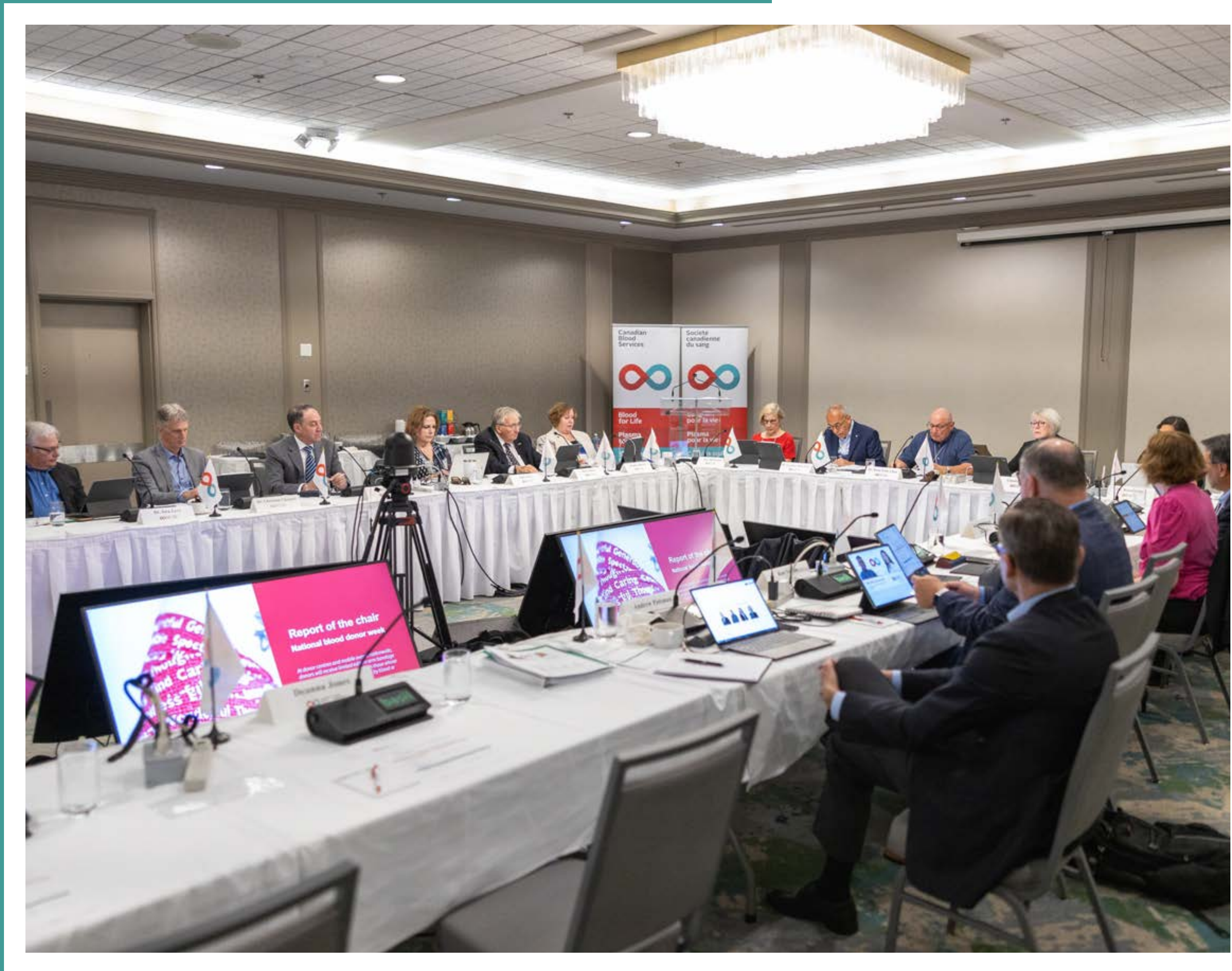
We assess the sustainability attributes of a wide range of products and materials procured for our daily operations.



Kirsten, employee, wears her many corporate pins with her employee ID card.

Governance

Because Canadian Blood Services was founded in response to a crisis in the blood system, we understood from day one that our efforts to support and protect people across Canada must rest on the bedrock of sound governance. In reporting on this dimension of ESG, we focus on our commitment to ethical behaviour and to upholding rigorous standards of quality, safety, security and respect for human rights.



Our governance principles

Our organization is structured to ensure vigilant oversight of our management and operations while affirming our independence as a national blood operator.

We adhere to a comprehensive set of business practices aimed at providing safe, high-quality products and services for transfusion and transplantation. In fulfilling our mandate, we engage with diverse stakeholders in Canada’s health systems, the scientific and medical communities, patient organizations, key equity-deserving groups and other communities across the country.

- Our charitable organization was created by a memorandum of understanding among the federal, provincial and territorial governments (excluding Quebec).** While we operate independently from government, we are regulated, like all biologics manufacturers, by Health Canada through the federal Food and Drugs Act. Most of our financial support is provided by provincial and territorial governments. We receive federal financial support primarily for research and development activities, as well as for our role in organ and tissue donation and transplantation.
- Health ministers of the provinces and territories (except Quebec) serve as corporate members of Canadian Blood Services.** They appoint our board of directors under bylaws governed by the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. Accountability relationships with the health ministries are set out in the National Accountability Agreement signed in 2019. A lead province is designated every two years. (British Columbia is the lead province until April 1, 2025, when Nova Scotia will assume the role for two years.) The provincial and territorial health ministers collectively approve our annual budget and our corporate plan.
- Canadian Blood Services is governed by a board of directors that is responsible for overall direction and oversight of the organization.** Accountable to the corporate members, the board is also responsible for ensuring that we meet our obligations under the National Accountability Agreement. The chief executive officer, who is accountable to the board of directors, is responsible for the management and day-to-day operations of Canadian Blood Services and for ensuring that all orders and resolutions of the board are carried out. The executive management team reports to the CEO, and its members are officers of the corporation.

Open board meeting

Twice a year, the board of directors of Canadian Blood Services invites direct input from stakeholders at open board meetings. Questions and presentations can be on any topic and in the past have ranged from the concerns of patient groups and clinicians to broader social, economic and environmental issues. Members of the public who wish to address the board are asked to follow a set of guidelines designed to ensure inclusivity while avoiding overlap among parties with shared interests or concerns. The guidelines also establish parameters for presentation length and scope. As part of our commitment to transparency, these board sessions are open to the public, both in person and online via livestream, and we make full minutes and video recordings available on our website.

As a regular component of these public meetings, the board invites a blood, plasma, stem cell or organ recipient to share their story. Listening to the experiences of patients and family members is an integral and deeply meaningful way to reinforce our commitment to help every patient, match every need and serve every Canadian.

Gail, a blood and stem cell recipient, shares her story at a Canadian Blood Service’s open board meeting.





Ethics and standards of conduct

To deliver on our promise as **Canada's Lifeline**, it's critical that we earn the trust of colleagues, of donor and registrants, of care providers and other stakeholders across Canada's health systems — and, above all, of the patients who ultimately depend on our efforts. To maintain that trust, we must always act ethically and responsibly.

- **We build and maintain an ethical culture by:**

- fostering a safe, inclusive and equitable work environment
- striving constantly to maintain rigorous standards, from our strong corporate governance to our disciplined management of safety and quality
- complying with relevant laws and regulations
- operating openly and collaboratively with our stakeholders
- acting at all times with honesty and integrity, recognizing that we're accountable not only for what we do, but how we do it.

- **Our Code of Conduct governs how we work together.** All Canadian Blood Services employees, volunteers, as well as our board of directors, are expected to:

- uphold our core values, treating colleagues, donors and registrants, volunteers, hospital customers and other partners with fairness and respect
 - safeguard the personal information of employees, donors, registrants and patients as well as corporate information
 - use computers, phones and other technologies in compliance with our formal policies and procedures
 - avoid conflicts of interest, never bringing the honesty or impartiality of our organization into question
 - act in ways that protect and enhance our corporate reputation.
- **We're committed to maintaining a work environment in which all employees feel they can report improper activities.** We've established a safe reporting policy (with a third-party provider) that employees can use to raise concerns anonymously, free from pressure or fear of retribution. This system provides an independent forum for reporting inappropriate behaviours or practices in any area of our operations.

We strive at all times to act with honesty and integrity, recognizing that we're accountable not only for what we do, but how we do it.

Our role in health system governance

- Working with our partners in organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT) across Canada, we help to evolve and codify governance for the sector.** In April 2024, federal, provincial and territorial deputy ministers of health (excluding Quebec) endorsed a Pan-Canadian Governance Framework for Organ Donation and Transplantation. Once implemented, this governance framework will improve how we coordinate decision-making and collaboration in the delivery of OTDT services in Canada. Canadian Blood Services welcomes this added clarity around roles and responsibilities as we continue to facilitate interprovincial organ sharing, advance professional education and public awareness, and explore new ways to exchange valuable data and insights across the OTDT community.
- Canadian Blood Services serves as the secretariat of the National Emergency Blood Management Committee (NEBMC).** Joining our corporate representatives on this critical oversight body are members of the National Advisory Committee on Blood and Blood Products, an interprovincial group that provides medical and technical guidance, as well as officials from provincial and territorial ministries of health. The NEBMC develops recommendations and provides advice — to the provincial and territorial ministries of health, to hospitals and regional health authorities, and to our own organization — as we respond to critical blood shortages in Canada.

In fulfilling our mandate, we engage with diverse stakeholders in Canada’s health systems, the scientific and medical communities, patient organizations, key equity-deserving groups and other communities across the country.



Our commitment to quality

Since Canadian Blood Services was founded as a national blood operator, we've steadily expanded our offering of life essentials for transfusion and transplantation to include blood, plasma, stem cells, and organs and tissues.

In providing patients across Canada with lifesaving and life-changing products and services, we work alongside our health system partners to uphold high standards of safety and efficacy.

Underpinning these efforts is our unwavering commitment to quality. It's what enables us to deliver safe, effective products and services for patients; to provide satisfying experiences to donors and registrants; and ultimately to help improve health outcomes while enhancing system performance and cost-efficiency.

- **Our quality policy and processes support a multi-tiered safety system designed to protect everyone who contributes to Canada's Lifeline.** This includes donors, registrants, employees, volunteers and patients.
- **Canada's blood system is recognized as one of the safest in the world.** To ensure that continues to be the case, we remain vigilant in managing all aspects of system quality. Canadian Blood Services teams maintain constant surveillance of the blood supply:
 - We screen and test all prospective donors to minimize the potential transmission of blood-borne infections, including HIV, HTLV, syphilis and hepatitis.
 - In some cases — depending on the time of year and whether a donor has travelled to a location where chances of infection are high — we test blood samples for West Nile virus and Chagas disease.
 - We investigate reports of adverse reactions.

- We scan the horizon for new and emerging pathogens that could pose risks today or in the future.
- We use the data and insights we gain to put additional safeguards in place, further reducing risks to the blood supply.
- **We're constantly enhancing our measures to protect against the transmission of infection through transfusions of blood or blood products.** Over the past few years, we've begun deploying pathogen inactivation technology at our production facilities to neutralize potential infectious agents — including viruses, bacteria and parasites — that could remain despite other rigorous safety measures. In the spring of 2024, we made pathogen-reduced platelets available to all our hospital customers.
- **Our quality management system is informed by the best practices of biologics manufacturers around the world.** In recent years, we've improved both service and productivity by increasing standardization, enhancing workflows and deploying new technologies. With valuable input from Canadian Blood Services employees, we've eliminated unnecessary complexity in our documentation — and harmonized regional variations — to create clear, simple instructions for every task. And we've introduced an integrated learning management system that will ensure all employees receive timely, consistent training.



- **Our Quality Policy is a set of action-based principles for employees in all areas.** Aligned with our operational pillars — *Safeguard, Engage* and *Improve* — it maps out how Canadian Blood Services will continue to evolve and advance as we deliver our products and services efficiently, to the most rigorous standards, on time, every time.

Managing various dimensions of risk

Effective risk management has been a core responsibility of Canadian Blood Services since our founding in 1998 after a series of blood system failures.

Today, as a vital partner to health care providers across Canada, our rigorous approach to risk is more important than ever. To continue providing patients with lifesaving products and services, we must be ready to respond to a wide range of potential disruptions, from a public health emergency sparked by a global pandemic, to the adverse effects of climate change, to supply chain delays caused by geopolitical issues.

- **The range of risks we must be ready to address is as varied and complex as our operations.**
 - We maintain rigorous safety and quality standards in providing products and services for patient care.
 - We also work to protect the well-being of donors and registrants in their various interactions with us.
 - We measure our workplace performance against industry benchmarks for employee health and safety. *(For more on health and safety, please see section 403 of the GRI Index, page 58).*
 - To insure against potential risks related to Canadian Blood Services activities, we operate two wholly owned captive insurance companies, which together provide up to \$1 billion in comprehensive coverage.
 - Our financial management practices include prudent management of market risk, credit risk and liquidity risk (detailed in the management analysis section of our annual report).
 - And we have continuity and response plans in place to maintain critical operations in the event of disruptions of our digital or physical infrastructure.

- **We undertake regular reviews of risks to determine what measures may be required to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts to our operations.** During the past year, our resilience and preparedness committee began conducting a detailed hazard risk assessment to identify potential threats to the continued availability and reliability of our operations in the face of disruptive events. This assessment will provide a comprehensive picture of operational risks and indicate where additional investment may be required.
- **The growing climate crisis has heightened awareness of potential risks to the integrity of the blood system.** In pursuing our commitment to “operate a climate-resilient, sustainable lifeline,” we’ve identified some key priorities:
 - Evaluate the climate risks affecting all areas of our operations, including collections, manufacturing, logistics, supply chain and employee health, safety and well-being — along with the overall labour market.
 - Continue to monitor emerging pathogens while ensuring we have the capacity and tools to respond quickly if we’re faced with a new blood-borne infection.
 - Strengthen our physical and digital infrastructure to protect against extreme climate events, whose frequency and severity is expected to increase.



- Enhance our business continuity planning, elevating preparedness through continuous testing and scenario exercises.
- Collaborate with partners to improve our resilience as we face growing impacts from climate change.

(For more on how we consider climate-related risk within our overall environmental strategy, please see “Setting the context,” page 31.)

We undertake regular reviews of risks to determine what measures may be required to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts to our operations.

Training in information security and privacy protection is mandatory for all Canadian Blood Services employees and volunteers.



Protecting personal information and cybersecurity

Canadian Blood Services is committed to safeguarding the information we collect about our donors, registrants, patients, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders.

We have strict protocols and training measures in place to reinforce this critical responsibility. At the same time, we protect against cyber threats to our operations by regularly evaluating and testing our security measures to ensure we can maintain business continuity in the event of a disruption.

- **In 2023–2024, we named a new Chief Privacy and Compliance Officer.** At the same time, we established a new management role overseeing the day-to-day operations of our information privacy program.
- **We’ve introduced a single privacy notice for all blood and plasma donors, stem cell registrants and cord blood donors.** This consolidated notice describes why Canadian Blood Services collects, uses and discloses personal information in working to meet the needs of patients. In addition, we now seek express consent from blood and plasma donors for our use of their information, mirroring the process already in place for stem cell registrants and cord blood donors.
- **The technology security team monitors our network and systems for signs of cyber incidents that could disrupt operations, service quality or administrative functions.** During the past year, the team pursued several initiatives to bolster our security profile and enhance overall risk reduction while also helping employees work more productively.
- **Training in information security and privacy protection is mandatory for all Canadian Blood Services employees and volunteers.** In 2023–2024, we introduced updated privacy training and an annual refresher module to complement our other standard security training. We implemented monthly incident response exercises to prepare security professionals for unforeseen cyber-attacks and other disruptions. Employees can also take advantage of “Ask the Expert” sessions, lunch-and-learns on protecting personal information, tips on how to manage passwords and cyber-safety videos on our intranet channel.
- **Our regular phishing exercises yielded positive results in 2023–2024.** More employees reported receiving suspicious emails, and fewer people mistakenly clicked on mock phishing exercises sent out by the security team. These are positive indicators of increased awareness among employees.

Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain

Canadian Blood Services promotes high ethical standards and practices among our suppliers. We expect vendors to comply with the standards articulated in our **Supplier Code of Conduct (Code)**, which in 2023–2024 was integrated into our procurement and supplier management processes.

- **Grounded in our values, the Code is informed by international standards:** the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant Conventions of the International Labour Organization.
- **The Code sets out our expectations of suppliers** regarding ethical business conduct, respect for employment standards and the responsible management of environmental impacts. Suppliers must ensure safe and fair working conditions for their employees, as well as for all workers in businesses they rely on for goods and services.
- **Suppliers are accountable for their practices and those of their vendors, contractors, sub-contractors and any other entities that contribute to our supply chain.** Suppliers must maintain records relating to all areas covered by the Code and make them available to us upon request. The Code affirms our right to commission third-party audits of relevant supplier activities, along with suppliers' obligation to monitor their compliance and inform us of any evident or potential violations.
- **The Code formalizes practices that have been adopted, in various forms, by responsible organizations globally.** It strengthens our relationships with suppliers while mitigating risks to the integrity of our product and services, and to the reputation of Canadian Blood Services. We're committed to working with our suppliers to address human rights-related concerns or violations and to ensure that our guiding values are extended across the supply chain.

We recognize ESG impacts as a source of financial and reputational risk — but also as opportunities to enhance the sustainability of **Canada's Lifeline**.



Investing our financial assets responsibly

Our strategic commitment to sustainability also extends to the financial management of Canadian Blood Services.

We consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in our decision-making around the investment of key assets. These include the funds that support our employee pension plans, as well as the assets of our two captive insurance subsidiaries — CBS Insurance Company Limited and Canadian Blood Services Captive Insurance Company Limited — which together provide up to \$1 billion in comprehensive coverage of potential risks in the blood supply system.

Weighing ESG considerations is part of an integrated investment approach that we pursue for most asset classes and portfolio management scenarios, including those aimed at public and private markets, as well as active investment strategies. We recognize ESG impacts as a source of financial and reputational risk — but also as opportunities to enhance the sustainability of **Canada's Lifeline**.

GRI Index

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards provide organizations with a framework for reporting on their impacts on the economy, the environment and society. To produce our 2023–2024 Sustainability Report, Canadian Blood Services has reported in accordance with the GRI Standards for the period from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. The following GRI Content Index — GRI 1: Foundation 2021 reflects the material topics that emerged in our most recent materiality assessment. Some responses include references to other sections in this report and links to relevant information on our website, **blood.ca**.



GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
General disclosures			
Organization and reporting practices			
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021	2-1	Organizational details	Canadian Blood Services/Société Canadienne du sang was incorporated in 1998 under the Canada Corporations Act. In 2014, articles of continuance were filed to transition to the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. Functioning as an independent charitable organization, Canadian Blood Services operates at arm's length from government. Our corporate members are the ministers of health of all provinces and territories in Canada, excluding Quebec. Headquartered in Ottawa, our organization wholly operates within Canada. See also <i>Who we are</i> (page 5).
	2-2	Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	This sustainability report covers the operations of Canadian Blood Services. Not included in this report, unless otherwise noted, are two wholly owned subsidiaries: CBS Insurance Company Limited (CBSI) and Canadian Blood Services Captive Insurance Company Limited (CBSE). Together, these captive insurance companies provide comprehensive blood risk insurance covering losses up to \$1 billion. Our audited financial statements are available on our website.
	2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point	This sustainability report covers the 2023–2024 fiscal year (from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024); the reporting period is aligned with our annual financial reporting. Canadian Blood Services will continue to publish subsequent reports annually. Please direct all questions to sustainability@blood.ca .
	2-4	Restatements of information	In the process of compiling this report, certain information from last year's report has been restated to reflect more accurate data, updated methodologies or corrections of errors. These restatements ensure that our reporting remains transparent and reliable. They can be summarized as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In our last report, a conversion error (from MMBtu to GJ) resulted in a misstatement of steam energy consumption in 302-1. Moving forward, all steam energy will be reported in gigajoules (GJ) to maintain consistency and align with standard energy reporting practices. • In our last report, under section 302-3, our first calculation of energy intensity was described incorrectly. We have now corrected the error. • In this year's report, values in 305-4 and 306-3 have been rounded to two decimal places instead of one. • Final figures in 306-3 have been slightly adjusted relative to last year's report following a change in rounding methodology.
	2-5	External assurance	This report has not been externally assured.
Activities and workers			
	2-6	Activities, value chain and other business relationships	For details on the organization's activities, see <i>Who we are</i> , (page 5), <i>What we do</i> (page 6) and <i>Where we operate</i> (page 7). More information is available on our website .
	2-7	Employees	At our 2023–2024 year-end, Canadian Blood Services had 3,750 employees. Of this total, about 60 per cent were full-time and 40 per cent were part-time. More detailed information on employees is not currently available. See also <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23).
	2-8	Workers who are not employees	Information on workers who are not employees — for example, volunteers at Canadian Blood Services donor centres — is not available for disclosure except where otherwise noted.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Governance			
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021 (continued)	2-9	Governance structure and composition	<p>Canadian Blood Services is overseen by a board of directors. Directors are elected for four-year terms by our corporate members, and these terms may be renewed. Two directors are elected from the general public on the basis of their relevant knowledge or experience with organizations that represent persons using our products and services. No members of our executive management team are on the board of directors.</p> <p>Canadian Blood Services has committed to the federal government's 50 – 30 Challenge, which aims for gender parity — 50 per cent women and/or non-binary people — and significant representation (30 per cent) from of other equity-deserving groups, including those who identify as racialized, Black and/or people of colour (“visible minorities”); people with disabilities (including invisible and episodic); 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or gender and sexually diverse individuals; and Aboriginal and/or Indigenous Peoples. In fulfillment of our commitments under the 50 – 30 Challenge, we can report that by fiscal year-end, 54 per cent of our board identified as female and 38 per cent were from underrepresented social groups. Please note that the categorization of these directors does not align precisely with how we polled our workforce through the 2023 Employee Inclusion Survey (see page 25).</p> <p>More details on the governance structure of Canadian Blood Services are included in <i>Our governance principles</i> (page 40), on our corporate website and in our annual report.</p>
	2-10	Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	The recruitment, nomination and election process for directors is the responsibility of provincial and territorial ministers of health, as corporate members of Canadian Blood Services. This process is facilitated by the Director Selection Advisory Committee, which is managed jointly by the provincial and territorial lead minister and the board chair of Canadian Blood Services, supported by a third-party consultant. A short list of candidates is developed following a public advertisement period. The health ministers then approve the list of all nominees and appoint the board of directors, usually at the annual general meeting of corporate members of Canadian Blood Services.
	2-11	Chair of the highest governance body	The chair of our board of directors is not a member of the executive management team of Canadian Blood Services. More details on our board of directors are included in <i>Our governance principles</i> (page 40) and on our website .
	2-12	Role of the highest governance body overseeing the management of impacts	<p>In accordance with the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, the corporate members of Canadian Blood Services approve our mandate, while the board of directors approves our corporate values and mission statement. Responsibility for the development of strategies, policies and goals related to sustainable development rests with the executive management team, guided by strategic oversight and input from the board of directors.</p> <p>The board receives updates — directly and via committee reporting — on a wide variety of topics, including impacts on the economy, environment and people. Twice yearly, the board receives direct input from stakeholders at open board meetings. Questions and presentations can focus on any topic and in the past have covered social, environmental and economic issues.</p> <p>For more details on how the organization engages stakeholders, see <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9). In addition, some directors attend the biannual Patient Engagement Forum, which includes external stakeholders — and then provide quarterly reports to the board. This feedback enables us to better understand the interests and concerns of stakeholders and take appropriate actions.</p>
	2-13	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	<p>In <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9), approved by board of directors and the executive management team in 2023, we outline priority topics that Canadian Blood Services has committed to addressing. Team members have been assigned to oversee various workstreams within each of the framework's three priorities.</p> <p>Further responsibilities of the board of directors, executive management team and all employees and volunteers are outlined in our internal-facing Sustainability Policy, which was approved during the reporting year and will be implemented during 2024–2025.</p>
	2-14	Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	More details on the responsibilities of the executive management team and the board of directors in relation to sustainability reporting are included in <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9) and <i>Our governance principles</i> (page 40). The executive management team and the board of directors have reviewed this sustainability report in its entirety prior to publication.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Governance *(continued)*

GRI 2: General Disclosures
2021 *(continued)*

2-15	Conflicts of interest	All board members are subject to our Board of Director Conflict of Interest Policy, which is reviewed and signed annually by all directors. Prior to serving on the board and throughout their terms in office, directors must openly disclose to the board any potential, real or perceived conflict of interest as soon as the issue arises. Directors are also asked at the beginning of each board meeting if they have any potential conflicts of interest. All replies are recorded in board minutes.
2-16	Communication of critical concerns	There are many mechanisms that stakeholders can use to report actual or perceived critical concerns to the organization. For Canadian Blood Services employees, our Safe Reporting Policy details the process to escalate concerns internally; we also provide a third-party platform for registering concerns anonymously. External stakeholders can raise concerns at our open board meetings. And throughout the year, they can use our toll-free phone number, email or conventional mail to obtain general information, provide feedback and express concerns. Issues raised are reviewed internally, then appropriately addressed; they are also reported quarterly, as necessary, to the Governance Committee of our board of directors. For confidentiality reasons, we are unable to report quantitative data on this topic.
2-17	Collective knowledge of the highest governance body	Education sessions provided to board members include sustainability-related information and themes. In addition, board members are encouraged to engage in external education on various topics to advance their knowledge. See blood.ca for additional information on board members.
2-18	Evaluation of the performance of the highest body	Our board of directors is evaluated frequently. A survey is completed after each meeting of the board and/or its committees. Results are reviewed by the Governance Committee to determine if any action is warranted. Approximately every three years, directors complete a more comprehensive evaluation survey regarding the board, the board chair, committees, committee chairs and directors. Results are reviewed by the board's Governance Committee to determine priorities and action items, and then shared with the full board.
2-19	Remuneration policies	See our annual report for details on executive and director remuneration.
2-20	Process to determine remuneration	See our annual report for details on executive and director remuneration.
2-21	Annual total compensation ratio	This information is not currently available. We voluntarily publish an annual salary disclosure on our website.
Strategies, policies and practices		
2-22	Statement on sustainable development strategy	Please see <i>A message from our chief executive officer</i> (page 3), which introduces this sustainability report.
2-23	Policy commitments	Canadian Blood Services has adopted a set of values under the banner ICARE: Integrity, Collaboration, Adaptability, Respect and Excellence. These values, along with our mission and vision, are the principles that guide everything we do, individually and acting together. We are committed to building and maintaining an organizational culture that is diverse, equitable and inclusive for all stakeholders, including donors, registrants, employees, volunteers and partners. Our expectations for responsible conduct and the protection of human rights in the workplace are expressed through several policies, including our <i>Code of Conduct</i> , which requires the compliance of all employees, volunteers and members of our board of directors. Under our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , published during 2023–2024, we expect all Canadian Blood Services suppliers to uphold ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers. Our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> is informed by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organization Conventions. See also <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Strategies, policies and practices *(continued)*

GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021 <i>(continued)</i>	2-24	Embedding policy commitments	Our board of directors and the executive management team are committed to the highest standards of ethics and to promoting a culture of ethical behaviour and compliance across Canadian Blood Services. Roles, responsibilities and expectations are outlined in various policies for all levels of the organization, including board, executive management, leaders and employees. Suppliers are now required to sign our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> (see 2-23) as a condition of doing business with Canadian Blood Services. All employees must complete training related to expectations around conduct (particularly regarding potential conflicts of interest), respect among co-workers, accessibility, human rights in the workplace and diversity, equity and inclusion. More policy details can be found in <i>Our governance principles</i> (page 40) and on our website.
	2-25	Processes to remediate negative impacts	Canadian Blood Services provides several mechanisms by which stakeholders can raise critical concerns (see 2-16). We track all feedback and respond using the appropriate operating practices and processes. For more details on how we engage with stakeholders, see <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9).
	2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	We have an established process for managing the development and implementation of policies. As stated in our Quality Policy , everyone in the organization has a responsibility to voice any concerns about the implications or outcomes of a specific policy. Our <i>Code of Conduct</i> also identifies reporting mechanisms and channels for raising concerns. Employees are able to submit anonymous reports regarding improper behaviour or practices through our Safe Reporting platform, which is operated by a third party. For details on how concerns raised by employees are addressed by the organization, please see 406-1. Any suspected or actual violations of our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> can be communicated to Canadian Blood Services via email.
	2-27	Compliance with laws and regulations	During the reporting period, no instances of significant non-compliance were observed. Responses to Health Canada audit observations and inspections are posted on our website . See 416-2 for more details.
	2-28	Membership associations	Canadian Blood Services is a member of many associations, including the Alliance of Blood Operators, AABB (the Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies), the International Society of Blood Transfusions and the World Marrow Donor Association .

Stakeholder engagement

	2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement	See <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9).
	2-30	Collective bargaining agreements	About 61 per cent of Canadian Blood Services employees are unionized and/or covered by collective bargaining agreements. For non-union employees, terms and conditions of employment are based on a range of factors, including a review of collective agreements for our unionized employees and of those in other organizations providing acute health care, as well as in industry generally. Our terms and conditions for non-union employment are designed to maintain competitiveness in recruiting and retention. For more details on our workforce, see <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23).

Material topics

GRI 3: Material Topics 2021	3-1	Process to determine material topics	See <i>Our strategic commitment to sustainability</i> (page 9).
	3-2	List of material topics	

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Economic topics			
GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	For details on how funds are managed, see our latest annual report .
	201-1	Direct economic value generated and distributed	This indicator is not applicable to Canadian Blood Services as a not-for-profit organization.
	201-2	Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	Information on the financial implications of climate change is not available.
	201-3	Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans	See our annual report for details on our defined benefit pension plan obligations and other retirement and post-employment benefits.
	201-4	Financial assistance received from government	Canadian Blood Services receives most of the financial support required to carry out our charitable activities from the provincial, territorial and federal governments. Audited financial information is published in our annual report .
GRI 204: Procurement Practices 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	204-1	Proportion of spending on local suppliers	Information on the proportion of spending we direct to local suppliers is not currently available.
GRI 205: Anti-corruption 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Ethics and standards of conduct</i> (page 41).
	205-1	Operations assessed for risks related to corruption	Canadian Blood Services is committed to operating in accordance with the values and ethical standards outlined in our <i>Code of Conduct</i> .
	205-2	Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures	Canadian Blood Services is committed to operating in accordance with the values and ethical standards outlined in our <i>Code of Conduct</i> . All employees, members of our board of directors, fee-for-service contractors and volunteers are required to comply with this code. They are also obliged to avoid fraudulent, inappropriate or unethical behaviour, and to be accountable for their actions on behalf of or when representing Canadian Blood Services. Quantitative metrics on this topic are not currently available.
	205-3	Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken	There were no confirmed incidents of corruption during the reporting period.
Environmental topics			
GRI 301: Materials 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Using sustainable materials wherever we can</i> (page 38).
	301-1	Materials used by weight or volume	Detailed information on this topic is not collected at this time.
	301-2	Recycled input materials used	This indicator is not material to Canadian Blood Services.
	301-3	Reclaimed products and their packaging materials	This indicator is not material to Canadian Blood Services.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Environmental topics *(continued)*

3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33).
-----	-------------------------------	---

302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	Energy data recorded in a variety of units have been converted into gigajoules (GJ) in the following table:					
		Energy consumption in GJ	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
		Electricity	140,452	130,560	130,587	125,650	129,372
		Natural gas	101,845	102,093	105,424	111,402	108,266
		Steam	39,719	9,713	8,434	8,841	6,696
		Diesel	1,200	864	766	1,247	1,082
		Solar (photovoltaic)	1,456	1,847	2,013	2,185	2,092
		Total	284,672	245,077	247,224	249,325	247,508

302-2	Energy consumption outside of the organization	Energy consumption outside the organization is not tracked.
-------	--	---

GRI 302: Energy 2016

302-3	Energy intensity	We calculate energy intensity in two ways. The first is a ratio representing total energy consumption divided by the weighted unit of blood and blood products produced by Canadian Blood Services:					
			2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
		Total energy (GJ)	284,672	245,077	247,224	249,325	247,508
		Weighted unit	1,069,935	1,026,601	1,069,378	1,080,171	1,178,984
Total GJ per weighted unit		0.26	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.21	

Our other way of calculating the energy intensity ratio represents total energy consumption divided by the total square footage of Canadian Blood Services facilities:

302-3	Energy intensity		2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
		Total energy (GJ)	284,672	245,077	247,224	249,325	247,508
		Total square footage of operations	1,361,974	1,269,068	1,233,734	1,269,826	1,284,679
		Total GJ per square foot	0.21	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.19

- Contextual information**
- Energy intensity is calculated using both weighted units and square footage. Organizations typically report energy intensity based on production units (in our case, weighted units) to provide insight into the energy required to manufacture a standard unit of product. However, we've also calculated energy intensity in terms of square footage so stakeholders can gauge our energy use relative to the real estate footprint of our facilities across Canada.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Environmental topics <i>(continued)</i>			
GRI 302: Energy 2016 <i>(continued)</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The weighted unit of blood and blood products is an input used in calculating productivity at our manufacturing facilities. This is a measure of the effort required to produce a single unit. The total square footage of our operations was calculated by taking the space we occupied each month and then averaging those figures over a 12-month period to determine the average square footage occupied throughout the year. Material changes to the total square footage of operations between 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 included a significant reduction in space occupied at our 67 College Street location in Toronto — from approximately 128,000 square feet to 24,000 square feet. Values have been rounded to two decimal places.
	302-4	Reduction of energy consumption	Since our 2019–2020 baseline, we have achieved a 13 per cent reduction in energy consumption, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to improving energy efficiency across our operations. See <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33) for more details on our efforts to reduce energy consumption.
	302-5	Reductions in energy requirements of products and services	Information on efforts to reduce energy requirements for specific products and services is not currently available.
	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Responsibly managing our water use</i> (page 38).
	303-1	Interactions with water as a shared resource	See <i>Responsibly managing our water use</i> (page 38).
GRI 303: Water and Effluents 2018	303-2	Management of water discharge-related impacts	Information on impacts related to water discharge is not currently available.
	303-3	Water withdrawal	<p>During the reporting period, 66.06 megalitres of water were drawn at Canadian Blood Services sites that currently have water meters. More information on water withdrawal is not currently available.</p> <p>Contextual information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately one-third of our sites, accounting for approximately three-quarters of our total real estate footprint, have water meters; this includes all our main production facilities. Water consumption at other facilities is not reflected in this metric due to a lack of available data.
	303-4	Water discharge	Information on water discharge is not currently available.
	303-5	Water consumption	Information on total water consumption is not currently available.
	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33) for details on how we manage our impacts related to climate change.
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	GHG emissions data is included in <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33).
	305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	GHG emissions data is included in <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33).
	305-3	Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	GHG emissions data is included in <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33).

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Environmental topics *(continued)*

GHG emissions intensity ratios for the past five years are summarized in the following table:

	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
Scope 1 (tCO₂e)	9,791	8,510	9,642	9,054	9,501
Scope 2 (market-based) (tCO₂e)	8,817	7,650	7,094	6,617	6,066
Scope 3 (including business travel) (tCO₂e)	2,050	724	678	1,943	2,146
Scope 3 (excluding business travel) (tCO₂e)	989	587	523	1,192	1,208
Weighted unit	1,069,935	1,026,601	1,069,378	1,080,171	1,178,984
Total kilograms of CO₂e per weighted unit (S1)	9.15	8.29	9.02	8.38	8.06
Total kilograms of CO₂e per weighted unit (S2)	8.24	7.45	6.63	6.13	5.15
Total kilograms of CO₂e per weighted unit (S3 including business travel)	1.92	0.71	0.64	1.80	1.82
Total kilograms of CO₂e per weighted unit (all scopes)	19.31	16.45	16.29	16.31	15.04
Total square footage of operations	1,361,974	1,269,068	1,233,734	1,269,826	1,284,679
Total kilograms of CO₂e per square foot (S1)	7.19	6.71	7.82	7.13	7.40
Total kilograms of CO₂e per square foot (S2)	6.47	6.03	5.75	5.21	4.72
Total kilograms of CO₂e per square foot (S3 excluding business travel)	0.73	0.46	0.42	0.94	0.94
Total kilograms of CO₂e per square foot (all scopes)	14.39	13.20	13.99	13.28	13.06

Contextual information

- We calculate emissions intensity in terms of both weighted units and square footage to provide greater insights into our sustainability performance and foster clearer understanding of environmental impacts. Additional information on weighted units and square footage is included in 302-3.
- Gases included in this metric include CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O.
- Business travel has been excluded from Scope 3 emissions when calculating total kilograms of CO₂e per square foot.
- Values have been rounded to two decimal places.

GRI 305: Emissions 2016
(continued)

305-4

GHG emissions intensity

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Environmental topics *(continued)*

GRI 305: Emissions 2016 <i>(continued)</i>	305-5	Reduction of GHG emissions	See <i>Reduce and mitigate our environmental impacts</i> (page 33). In 2023–2024, Canadian Blood Services reduced total emissions (market-based) by 14 per cent compared to 2019–2020.					
	305-6	Emissions of ozone-depleting substances (ODS)	Information on emissions of ozone-depleting substances is not currently available.					
	305-7	Nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx) and other significant air emissions	Information on nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx) and other significant air emissions are not currently available.					
GRI 306: Waste 2020	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Managing waste</i> (page 37).					
	306-1	Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts	See <i>Managing waste</i> (page 37).					
	306-2	Management of significant waste-related impacts	See <i>Managing waste</i> (page 37).					
	306-3	Waste generated	The following table shows the total weight in metric tonnes of waste generated, as well as a breakdown of this total by composition:					
				2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
			Landfill	848.33	908.94	769.06	1,209.76	1,023.42
			Recycling (comingled)	239.52	266.04	236.39	256.72	397.47
			Organics/composting	45.29	37.31	23.98	28.69	39.52
			Biomedical (plastic and metal)	338.37	314.87	285.49	332.66	363.35
			Recycling (paper)	387.95	330.43	648.49	459.12	513.79
E-waste			9.36	8.58	8.98	0.49	4.71	
Medical equipment (recycled or donated)			9.36	100.35	100.12	83.77	57.06	
Medical equipment (landfill)			0.00	8.07	7.95	6.25	4.43	
		Masks	0.01	0.06	1.20	0.66	0.60	
		Total	1,878.18	1,974.65	2,081.66	2,378.12	2,401.35	
		Total waste directed for disposal	1,186.69	1,231.88	1,062.50	1,548.67	1,391.20	
		Total waste diverted from disposal	691.49	742.77	1,019.16	829.45	1,010.15	
		Contextual information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values have been rounded to two decimal places. • In 2019–2020, there was no differentiation between e-waste and medical equipment (recycled or donated). We’ve therefore divided the total value evenly between the two categories. 					
306-4	Waste diverted from disposal	The total weight in metric tonnes of waste diverted from disposal is disclosed in 306-3. This includes organics and composting, recycling (comingled), recycling (paper), e-waste, medical equipment (recycled or donated) and masks.						

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Environmental topics <i>(continued)</i>			
GRI 306: Waste 2020 <i>(continued)</i>	306-5	Waste directed for disposal	The total weight in metric tonnes of waste directed to disposal is disclosed in 306-3. This includes landfill, biomedical and medical equipment (landfill). To protect against biosecurity risks, our biomedical waste is incinerated by a third-party waste hauler.
	3-3	Management of material topics	During the reporting period, we published a <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> setting out the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in responsibly managing environmental impacts. The Code is available on our corporate website. See also <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
GRI 308: Supplier Environmental Assessment 2016	308-1	New suppliers that are screened using environmental criteria	Since the release of our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , new suppliers are required to sign off on the <i>Code</i> as a condition of doing business with Canadian Blood Services. The <i>Code</i> sets forth the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in relation to upholding ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers, and responsible management of environmental impacts. The <i>Code</i> is now included in the vendor onboarding process. See also <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	308-2	Negative environmental impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	Information on negative environmental impacts in our supply chain is not currently available.
Social topics			
GRI 401: Employment 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23).
	401-1	New employee hires and employee turnover	The organization hired or rehired 602 employees in 2023–2024. During the same period, 493 employees left the organization, either voluntarily or involuntarily. More information on employees is not currently available. Contextual information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This metric excludes instances of job abandonment, as well as candidates who never started their employment and fee-for-service contractors who reached the end of their contracts/terms during the reporting period.
	401-2	Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees	Union and non-union employees, both full-time and part-time, who meet the eligibility requirements are enrolled in our standard benefits program. Eligibility differs by collective bargaining agreement, terms of employment and jurisdiction. Similarly, employees who meet the eligibility requirements are enrolled in a program providing life, health care, dental, long-term disability, and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. Retiring employees who meet the eligibility requirements are able to enroll in programs offering post-retirement benefits.
GRI 402: Labour/Management Relations 2016	401-3	Parental leave	All full-time and part-time Canadian Blood Services employees are entitled to parental leave, subject to collective agreement provisions or the terms and conditions of non-union employment. During 2023–2024, 146 employees took parental leave. More information on such employees is not currently available.
	3-3	Management of material topics	We currently have 37 unique collective bargaining agreements in place for our employees across Canada. These agreements help establish mutually beneficial employment relations between Canadian Blood Services, our employees and the unions or associations that represent them. The agreements set forth terms and conditions of employment relating to remuneration, hours of work, health and safety, benefits and general working conditions. We routinely work with the unions or associations representing our employees to renegotiate these agreements at appropriate times, and to promote the morale, well-being and security of all employees impacted by the agreements.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Social topics (continued)			
GRI 402: Labour/Management Relations 2016 <i>(continued)</i>	402-1	Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	<p>Employees and/or their representatives are provided a minimum of 12 weeks' notice for significant operational changes that could substantially affect them. Notice periods in all collective agreements either meet or exceed statutory notice provisions in the provinces where employees reside. In addition to notice periods, our collective agreements stipulate provisions for consultation and/or negotiation.</p>
	3-3	Management of material topics	<p>Canadian Blood Services is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment. We have introduced many internal policies and procedures, notably our Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy, to guide our OHS processes and designate related roles and responsibilities across the organization.</p> <p>The vice-president of People, Culture and Performance directly oversees the OHS management program at the operational level, while board-level oversight is provided by the Talent Management Committee.</p> <p>Canadian Blood Services employees are empowered to contribute to OHS management through reporting any concerns, conducting workplace inspections and participating in safety training. All employees are required to complete training in safety awareness, rights and responsibilities, as well as specific hazard training when required.</p> <p>See also <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23).</p>
	403-1	Occupational health and safety management system	<p>Canadian Blood Services is working toward the establishment of a system that aligns with the requirements of CSA Standard Z45001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. All employees are covered under our current occupational health and safety management system.</p>
GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018	403-2	Hazard identification, risk assessment and incident investigation	<p>Canadian Blood Services has a range of processes for hazard identification, risk assessment and incident investigation. We use various risk assessment tools to help assess workplace health and safety risks, along with a conventional “hierarchy of controls” approach for mitigating risks associated with workplace hazards. This approach relies on the following order of priority for control types: elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls and personal protective equipment.</p> <p>Employees who feel they are being asked to perform unsafe work are encouraged to raise concerns to their supervisors.</p>
	403-3	Occupational health services	<p>Canadian Blood Services employees with occupational health and safety expertise provide both proactive and post-incident input to our ongoing management of risks. Health, safety and well-being are strongly regulated in our sector, and we recognize many best-practice approaches to ensuring the safety of all persons in the workplace. We've begun formally implementing a Health and Safety Management System that will integrate a proactive safety mindset into everything we do. This process will take several years to fully adopt.</p>
	403-4	Worker participation, consultation and communication on occupational health and safety	<p>Employees participate in our occupational health and safety management system in a variety of ways, including by reporting any concerns to their supervisors and completing workplace inspections. They can also serve on Joint Health and Safety Committees or as Joint Health and Safety Representatives. Information on general safety resources and specific hazards is shared through training programs, as well as electronic and verbal communications.</p> <p>We designate Joint Health and Safety Committees and Joint Health and Safety Representatives at all Canadian Blood Services sites in accordance with provincial health and safety legislation.</p>
	403-5	Worker training on occupational health and safety	<p>Canadian Blood Services requires all employees to complete basic health and safety training. This includes information about their safety-related rights, as well as the roles and responsibilities of employees, supervisors and employers. In addition, employees must complete training on the specific occupational hazards to which they may be exposed. Topics include chemical safety (WHMIS), bloodborne pathogens and fall protection.</p>

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------

Social topics *(continued)*

GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018 <i>(continued)</i>	403-6	Promotion of worker health	<p>We provide employees with paramedical benefits according to their terms and conditions of employment. Access to these benefits, which vary by employee group, can include access to treatment providers such as physiotherapists, optometrists, dentists and psychologists. Other resources to which some employees have access include the Employee and Family Assistance Program and a range of resources aimed at promoting well-being. These resources are made available by various means, both in-person and virtually.</p>	
	403-7	Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked by business relationships	<p>Our overall approach to health and safety risk management has direct impacts on Canadian Blood Services operations, product safety, business relationships and the patients we serve. We work to ensure that our occupational health and safety programs are inclusive and benefit all employees.</p>	
	403-8	Workers covered by an occupational health and safety management system	<p>Canadian Blood Services has not formally adopted an occupational health and safety management system. However, we are actively working to enhance components of the system we have in place to align with requirements of CSA Z45001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. Our current system covers all employees.</p>	
	403-9	Work-related injuries	<p>In our incident reporting and case management practices, we do not distinguish between workplace injuries and illnesses. For the purpose of this analysis, we have therefore combined both incident types as “WCB (Workplace Compensation Board) reportable incidents.” Information on non-employees is not currently available.</p> <p>For all employees during 2023–2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were zero fatalities resulting from work-related injuries. • A total of 125 WCB reportable incidents occurred — a rate of 25.00 per 1,000,000 hours worked. • The main types of incidents were manual material handling injuries; slips, trips and falls; exposure injuries; needlestick injuries; and instances of employees being either struck or caught by workplace equipment or fixtures. Manual material handling posed the highest risk of severe workplace injury. • We are taking various actions to reduce these risks, including ergonomics assessments, recommending equipment to reduce risks associated with current operational processes, and helping to design new work processes with controlled ergonomics risks. • We’ve yet to determine a clear reason for the increase in worker injury incidents compared to the previous fiscal year. We note a sharp increase in sprain or strain injuries, which may reflect a need for improved training on proper and safe lifting techniques. This is something we will continue to address moving forward. <p>Contextual information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of WCB reportable incidents was calculated using the following formula: (Number of WCB reportable incidents ÷ Number of hours worked) x 1,000,000. • Canadian Blood Services employees worked a total of 5,000,175.33 hours during the reporting period. • For the purposes of this analysis, high-consequence work-related injuries are treated like other WCB reportable incidents. 	
	403-10	Work-related ill health	<p>See 403-9 for our disclosure on work-related ill health.</p>	
	3-3	Management of material topics	<p>See <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23).</p>	
	404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee	<p>Information on employees’ average annual training hours is not currently available.</p>	
	404-2	Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance program	<p>See <i>Our people and culture</i> (page 23) for details on skills-upgrade programs.</p>	
	GRI 404: Training and Education 2016			

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Social topics (continued)			
GRI 404: Training and Education 2016 (continued)	404-3	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	Information on employees' performance and career development reviews is not currently available.
	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Diversity, equity, inclusion and reconciliation</i> (page 16). More information is also available on our corporate website.
GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity 2016	405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	See <i>Diversity, equity, inclusion and reconciliation</i> (page 16) for information on our workforce. Section 2-9 includes information on our board of directors.
	405-2	Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	Information is not currently available on the ratio of salary and remuneration between employees who identify as women and those who identify as men.
GRI 406: Non-discrimination 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	<p>Canadian Blood Services is committed to providing a respectful working environment free from violence and harassment. We have several policies in place explicitly stating that discrimination is not tolerated in the workplace. As well, our 37 collective agreements all explicitly prohibit discrimination. As outlined in our <i>Code of Conduct</i>, employees are encouraged to report any concerns regarding wrongdoing or violations of the <i>Code</i>.</p> <p>On receiving such reports, we investigate and take remedial action as appropriate. For any discrimination complaints received through non-centralized channels — for example, via employees' discussions with leaders at their locations or with representatives from the People, Culture & Performance team — appropriate individuals investigate, address the issues raised and take remedial action as needed.</p>
	406-1	Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	<p>Five claims related to discrimination on prohibited or protected grounds were filed by Canadian Blood Services employees in 2023–2024, either via the Safe Reporting platform for union dispute-resolution or through a provincial human rights tribunal or commission.</p> <p>Contextual information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This metric applies to all employee discrimination claims made under Canadian Blood Services policies or a provincial human rights code or act. We have narrowed this metric to reflect only claims on prohibited or protected grounds because in the language of our collective agreements, many employee grievance procedures reference non-discrimination clauses even when the issues in question are unrelated to discrimination. • This metric is limited to claims raised during the reporting period. • We considered providing information in this report on settlements, findings and decisions but determined this to be inappropriate. Such outcomes, as well as remedial actions, may occur well after the reporting period in which the claim was initially made — in which case information no longer reflects the current state of affairs. Further, outcomes may be subject to confidentiality requirements.
GRI 407: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	407-1	Operations and suppliers in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may be at risk	Canadian Blood Services complies with applicable employment standards and collective bargaining agreements everywhere we operate. During the reporting period, we released our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , which sets forth the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in upholding ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers.
GRI 408: Child Labour 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	408-1	Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of child labour	Canadian Blood Services complies with applicable employment standards and collective bargaining agreements everywhere we operate. During the reporting period, we released our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , which sets forth the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in upholding ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers.

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Social topics (continued)			
GRI 409: Forced or Compulsory Labour 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	409-1	Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labour	Canadian Blood Services complies with applicable employment standards and collective bargaining agreements everywhere we operate. During the reporting period, we released our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , which sets forth the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in upholding ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers.
GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	414-1	New suppliers that were screened using social criteria	Since the release of our <i>Supplier Code of Conduct</i> , all new vendors are required to sign off on the <i>Code</i> as a condition of doing business with Canadian Blood Services. The <i>Code</i> sets forth the minimum expectations our suppliers must meet in upholding ethical business conduct, employment standards and human rights for workers, as well as the responsible management of environmental impacts. The <i>Code</i> is now included in our vendor onboarding process. See also <i>Safeguarding human rights across our supply chain</i> (page 46).
	414-2	Negative social impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	Information on social impacts related to our supply chains is not currently available.
GRI 416: Customer Health and Safety 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Our commitment to quality</i> (page 43) for more on the controls that Canadian Blood Services has in place to ensure the products we distribute remain safe.
	416-1	Assessment of the health and safety impacts of products and service categories	<p>In 2023–2024, we assessed all Canadian Blood Services products for which potential health and safety impacts had been noted by our hospital customers. We document all such customer feedback.</p> <p>Contextual information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When hospital customers share comments through our national feedback portal, a case is opened, and details are entered in our case management database. (Alternatively, hospitals can open a case directly in the database via our website.) All cases are thoroughly investigated. Products that may pose a safety risk are quarantined and removed from inventory for a more comprehensive assessment. In some instances, we implement corrective action plans to address identified risks and prevent similar potential risks from recurring. Actions and decisions are documented, and we notify customers of any outcomes from the feedback they have provided.
	416-2	Incidents of non-compliance concerning the health and safety impacts of products and services	<p>Health Canada is responsible for regulatory oversight of Canadian Blood Services. In 2023–2024, the regulator conducted 13 inspections that yielded 35 observations — two major and 33 minor. There were no critical observations; all that required responses were addressed, and those inspections are now closed. Our detailed responses are available on our website.</p> <p>Contextual information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations made during Health Canada’s regulatory blood inspections have the following risk ratings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical: An observation that directly affects the safety of blood and is likely to result in immediate or latent risk to either donors or recipients of blood and blood components. A critical observation may involve fraud, misrepresentation or falsification of products or records. Major: An observation that potentially affects the safety of blood and could result in immediate or latent risk to either the donors or recipients of blood and components. Minor: An observation that is neither critical nor major but is a deviation from the Food and Drugs Act, R.S.C., 1985, c F-27 (amended on 2023-06-22) or Blood Regulations enabled under the Act. <p>Note: This metric includes Health Canada inspections of our whole blood and apheresis collections (including source plasma); however, it excludes our cord blood bank and wholesale activities.</p>

GRI disclosure topic	GRI disclosure number	GRI disclosure title/category	Reference/response
Social topics <i>(continued)</i>			
GRI 418: Customer Privacy 2016	3-3	Management of material topics	See <i>Protecting personal information and cybersecurity</i> (page 45).
	418-1	Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data	Canadian Blood Services did not receive any substantiated complaints related to privacy in the past year from donors, registrants or patients. We experienced a few minor privacy incidents — involving misdirected faxes and forms — that required notification of six affected individuals. There were no incidents that required notification of a provincial privacy commissioner or ombudsman.
Canadian Blood Services topic: Community Engagement and Collaboration	3-3	Management of material topics	We created this topic to evaluate and report on our community engagement and collaboration efforts in light of the GRI standards. For more information on this topic and the values that guide how we manage it, see <i>Engaging with our diverse stakeholders</i> (page 11) or refer to our Annual Report to Financial Donors .



**Canadian
Blood
Services**

BLOOD
PLASMA
STEM CELLS
ORGANS
& TISSUES