ALBERTA & NWT REGIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

SUMMARY NOTES from the face-to-face meeting of the Alberta & NWT Regional Liaison Committee held on **Friday, April 27, 2007** from 9am – 4 pm. The meeting venue was at the 3rd floor Boardroom of Canadian Blood Service, Calgary Centre, 737 13th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB.

PRESENT:

 Dave Duncan (Co-Chair)  Susan Matsumoto (Co-Chair)  
  Janene Flath  Joe Michielson  
  Robin Hood  Stephanie Perilli  
  Doris Kaufmann  Lynda Phelan  
  Candace Korchinsky  Meghan Saincher  
  Ian MacDonald  

REGRETS:

 Diana Carfantan  Darren Neuberger  
  Matthew Hinshaw  Jamie Pytel  
  Angela Killam  Sharon Schultz  
  Bobbi Klettke  Trevor Trinh  
  Jeff McNabb  Cst. Adele Zenko  

GUESTS:

 PJ Vankoughnett-Olson, CBS Head Office - Manager, Public Involvement  
  Cheryl Besner, CBS Head Office - Manager, Volunteer Program  
  Tony Steed, CBS Head Office - Director, Market Knowledge & Donor Insight (joined via teleconference)

1.0 Welcome and Opening of the Meeting

Dave D. thanked everyone for attending the meeting and ensured that all members were provided a meeting package. There was a round table introduction. The members gave their names and provided the organization and area they represent. A short ice breaker activity was facilitated by Susan M.

2.0 Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

- **Approval of Summary Notes**
  The January 17, 2007 summary notes were accepted as circulated. Dave D. informed the group that the minutes are also available on the internet via the blood.ca website. He also suggested using first names instead of last names in the minutes going forward.

- **Review of Action Items**
  Susan M. reviewed the following action items from the January 17th Summary Notes:
  - At the September RLC meeting, a question was raised regarding the ability to track the success of the new *Bring Someone Close to your Heart* campaign (Feb/07). Susan presented the following updates.
    - Target set for this campaign is to increase donors by 10%. The results are as follows:
      - Number of new donors
• Feb 2006 – 787 new donors (South); 489 (North)
• Feb 2007- 672 South (dropped 15% vs. LY) 518- North (15% increase)

  - Number of Donations
  • Feb 2006 - South 4843 WB donations; North 5010 WB donations
  • Feb 2007 - South 5648 (16.5% increase); North 5350 (7% increase)

  - At the January RLC during Doris K’s presentation on deferral criteria for Iron Levels, 2 questions were raised that required follow up:
    • What is the difference between the deferral rates in men vs. women?
      
      Doris K’s update:
      
      2005 – 2006 deferrals:
      Calgary – 15.4% women vs. 7% men; Edmonton - 17.5% women vs. 7.6% men
      2006 – 2007 deferrals:
      Calgary – 15.7% women vs. 7.3% men; Edmonton - 18.6% women vs. 9.2% men

      Generally females are deferred 2x more than males.

    • Why is the deferral period 56 days when iron levels could be raised in a span of a few days or weeks?
      
      ACTION: Doris K. to verify. Bring forward to the next meeting.

3.0 Business Arising

3.1 Collections and Hospital Orders

Summary Numbers for the FY2006-2007 collections and order fill rates were presented by Susan M.

### Whole Blood Collections to Target

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<tr>
<td>Alberta South</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<td>109%</td>
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<td>Alberta North</td>
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### Plasma/Platelets Collections to Target

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<tr>
<td>Alberta Platelets</td>
<td>103%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alberta Plasma</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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<td>93%</td>
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### Lethbridge/Red Deer Whole Blood Collections to Target

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<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
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<td>90%</td>
<td>103%</td>
<td>102%</td>
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<td>116%</td>
<td>107%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
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<td>117%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>104%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>115%</td>
<td>97%</td>
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Initially, the region struggled with the collections as we were significantly below target in Q1. By the end of June ’06, Alberta was the lowest among all the regions. A recovery plan was developed to address the slump thus the upward swing from July onwards. We ended the year with 100.6%
collections to target bringing Alberta to the no.1 spot across all regions. Our total Whole Blood collections also reflected a 3.3% growth over the previous year’s collections.

Our plasma and platelet collections did not do as well as whole blood with collections falling short of target – Plasma 98.8% and Platelet 96.3%. Apheresis recruitment is tied to one position. The individual responsible for recruiting plasma and platelets donors in Calgary was away from February to September ‘07.

Our satellite clinics have done their share in contributing to the increase in collections for the region. Lethbridge had media activity in December that helped increase their collections for that month. Red Deer was able to recruit 7 Partners for Life in September. Overall, beginning the month of September, a lot of media coverage took place and the Life Bus was introduced in Red Deer which helped bring more donors to our doors.

### Hospital Order fill Rates

#### Platelets

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<tr>
<td>Southern Alberta</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100.6%</td>
<td>100.8%</td>
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<td>99.9%</td>
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<td>99.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>94.89%</td>
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<td>Northern Alberta</td>
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<td>99.7%</td>
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<td>98.92%</td>
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#### Red Blood Cells - All Blood Group

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Alberta</td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
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<td>99.6%</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
<td>99.11%</td>
<td>99.91%</td>
<td>99.98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Alberta</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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<td>99.7%</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>99.6%</td>
<td>99.59%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>99.71%</td>
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Generally, we were able to meet the Hospital Order Fill rate target of 98%. There was one week in September that was quite low, at 91.3%, and that skewed the average for the month to 97.1%. One factor that could have affected the rate is the fact that Calgary hospitals had an unusual number of traumas that month.

The March slump in platelet fill rates in Southern Alberta is due to the support we gave out to BC/Y who was completely dependent on Calgary when they launched Buffy Coat.

### 3.2 NLC Representative Report

Janene F. attended the April 20-21 NLC meeting in Ottawa and the following were discussed:
- MSM Donor Deferral Issue
- Malaria Update on the Letters, a follow through was done and a fact sheet was included.
- Blood Group Genotyping a research project in Toronto that will be launched in September.
- Cord Blood Banking – currently looking at the possibility of establishing national cord blood bank system. CBS is being eyed to manage the system. A stakeholder meeting is scheduled on June 1 to discuss this. Target is to present this to the minister of Health within 2007.

Janene F. will not be able to attend the next NLC meeting in September.
3.3 Malaria Letters Feedback update
   o Brochure feedback
     PJ gave an update on Malaria through a PowerPoint presentation (attached). The final version of
     the Malaria letter was also shown to the group.
     There was very little negative feedback received from donors regarding the letter itself which is a
     good thing. The feedback of the local RLC members was taken in consideration as can be seen in
     the final letter.

3.4. Operation LifeBlood Update
   Susan M. gave a presentation on Operation LifeBlood (attached). The objective of this program is
   to recruit prospects who intend to donate and to convert them into new blood donors:
   • Recruit 7500 registrants
   • Convert 15% of registrants into new donors: 1125 new donors

   Operation LifeBlood was promoted in two phases in Alberta:
   • Phase 1: September 26 – December 31, 2006
   • Phase 2: January 1 – March 31, 2007

   Results of the program as of April 1, 2007 are as follows:
   Visitors to lifeblood.ca (unique visitors) = 38,462
   Number of People Registered = 3,579 (47.7%)
   Total New Donors = 234 (20.8% of target but still expected to increase in the next 12 months)

   Registration drive is complete. People who visit www.lifeblood.ca are redirected to
   www.blood.ca and given information about how to book their first donation.
   Among registrants: continue electronic communication for 12 months from the date people
   registered:
     o Quarterly e-newsletters
     o 6-month conversion e-mail
     o 17th birthday greeting
     o Thank you for donating e-mail (final e-mail for person)

   The following questions were raised during the OLB Presentation:
   1. Who won the Dell Computer?
      Action: PJ to follow up. Updates will be provided next meeting
   2. How do we compare to the London pilot?
      Action: Susan M. to give update on stats next meeting.

3.5. New Creative Platform
   Susan M. gave the group a general idea of CBS’ new marketing theme called “The Beauty of
   Blood” (presentation attached). Basically it is a new social change campaign that strongly
   communicates what CBS stands for and helps to differentiate ourselves from other causes. We
   want people to change the way they view blood and our cause.

   Commercials and Radio ads were played. The group had a very positive reaction to both the TV
   and radio ads.

4.0 New Business
4.1 National Blood Donor Week/World Blood Donor Day
   Doris K. provided a presentation (attached) on the upcoming National Blood Donor Week and
   World Blood Donor Day. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared June 14 as World
   Blood Donor Day (WBDD) - a day of celebration to honour and thank those people who donate
   blood on a voluntary basis. The First World Blood Donor Day was hosted by South Africa in
2004. Canada has been asked to act as the international host for World Blood Donor Day 2007. Canadian Blood Services has traditionally celebrated National Blood Donor Week with activities in clinics and regions across the country. This year, it will run June 11-16, 2007

**WBDD Global Theme** (from the World Health Organization): “Safe Blood for Safe Motherhood” to highlight the need for safe blood in the developing world. Internationally, 500,000 women die annually in childbirth - a safe and secure blood system can help prevent many of these deaths.

How can you help? We have developed a number of tools that our partners can use to support promoting these events. Would you consider the following?

- Sending an e-mail to your employees and/or customers promoting National Blood Donor Week and/or World Blood Donor Day and encouraging them to donate?
- Having your organization join our *Partners for Life* program?
- Placing a web banner ad on your company internet and/or intranet sites with a link to blood.ca
- Profiling these events via an advertisement or message in your internal publications – newsletters, pay cheques etc.
- Recognizing the contributions of donors in your organization via an internal event or communication from senior level management
- Promoting these events in some of your external communication and marketing materials highlighting the fact that you are a “proud supporter of National Blood Donor Week and World Blood Donor Day”; flyers, bill statements (on-line and print), signage etc…

PJ will send out an outreach package to all RLC members (includes, a news story, a web banner to be included in company publications and websites)

### 4.2 Youth Recruitment Overview

Susan M. gave an overview on Youth Recruitment strategies we do for our region (attached). CBS has developed relationships with several school boards on all four sites. Calgary Public School Board, Lethbridge Public and Lethbridge Catholic School Boards, Edmonton Public and Lethbridge Catholic School Boards, Red Deer Public and Catholic School Boards.

Annually, outreach to students is conducted including a combination of: WYTs, mobile clinics and classroom presentations (curriculum based).

Question posed during discussion: “How successful are these WYT events?” They are fairly successful according to Susan M. Schools try their best to outnumber each other in terms of number of donations. Several other RLC members shared their personal experiences where they were nudged by their kids to join the campaign and donate to increase units for their school.

Several Post-secondary student groups exist independent of CBS assisting in awareness, education, promotion of on-campus clinics, LifeBus and blood donor challenges.

There are youth coordinators taking care of these activities 3 out of 4 sites in the region. Youth are also recruited by CBS in ways other than just blood donation:

- Job fairs
- Volunteerism opportunities
- Operation LifeBlood (registrants were required to be 16 years of age).
4.3 Overview of Volunteer Program
Cheryl Besner, gave a presentation on CBS’ Volunteers Program (attached). The Volunteer Program Strategy is aimed at renewing, revitalizing and modernizing volunteer involvement in Canada’s blood system. The group has just completed the three year transition to a new strategy for recruiting, integrating and retaining volunteers. The focus has been on strengthening community partnership and tracking of involvements of 3rd party groups.

According to studies, we will see shifts in the volunteer labour pool demographics, their styles and extent of participation in volunteer programs. Also, long-term volunteers are being replaced by individuals whose attachment to volunteering are more short-term, episodic and involve fewer hours of volunteer activity each year. Going forward, this will be managed by creating a strategic direction that will respond to the expected impact of shifting volunteer demographics and expectations.

Cheryl B. also showed Volunteer Satisfaction Survey results done by Ipsos Reid in 2007:
- 82% of individual volunteers and 91% of Volunteer leaders are satisfied with their overall experience as a blood program volunteer.
- While dissatisfaction with their experience has not increased, overall satisfaction is lower compared to the 2004 survey.
- Despite this drop in volunteer satisfaction, there are other indicators that volunteers are satisfied with their experience.

The profile of volunteers “wants” based on the Satisfaction Survey Results includes:
- Ensuring that their time is used wisely.
- Making a difference in other people’s lives.
- Given more responsibility / more challenging roles.
- Words /gestures of appreciation.
- The amount of appreciation and encouragement received – volunteers are saying that it is not important to them but it’s nice to have.
- A verbal thanks works, no matter how it’s delivered (through an event or in a letter) - this is the most important form of recognition that majority of volunteers are saying that they want. Note that in Alberta the appreciation percentage is higher as compared to other regions.

Questions tabled to the group by Cheryl B.:
Taking into account the profile of our current volunteer base, their level of satisfaction and the impending shift in volunteer demographics, how do we plan to meet the needs and expectations of volunteers in the future?

The group’s suggestions include:
- The day by day thanks is what they want most.
- Creating a good efficient fun, team, to work with.
- Less formal get-togethers (e.g. BBQs).
- Family oriented activities that would invite family members – this would help make them feel that they are not taking time away from family.
- If you can’t give blood, give your time lead them to Volunteer Work.
- Do not pigeon hole activities to a single type of activity (formal, casual) make it diverse.
- Training them well.
- Making sure that their time was needed and useful.
4.4 Centre tour
The group was divided into 3 sub-groups to tour the Testing Lab, Production Lab and Clinic Operations of the CBS Calgary Centre. The group was led by Stephen Wright, Doris K. and Susan M.
Very positive feedback was received from the group after the tour.

4.5 Donor Segmentation presentation & discussion
Tony Steed joined the meeting via teleconference to give a presentation on the Donor Motivation Study Proposal (attached). The first slide shows the objectives of this study and that is mainly to understand donors’ motivation and needs to shape the way CBS serves and communicates with current and potential donors. The approach that CBS will take was discussed further on the succeeding slides. Essentially the intent is to build on what we have and take a look at what is out there.

Slide 8 of the presentation shows a list of Candidate Donor Dimensions and Tony S. posed the question to the group: “Do you associate yourself with any of these dimensions? Does the dimension you most associate with also relate to your involvement with the blood system (whether as donor, supporter, volunteer, etc.)? Is there any dimension that they may have missed?”

For comments and questions about the presentation the group was asked to forward them to CBS c/o Doris K. or Susan M.

4.6 MSM Update
PJ gave an update on Question 18: Deferral Consultation Strategy (presentation attached). Currently donor screening questionnaire (question#18) includes the question:

“Male donors: Have you had sex with a man, even one time, since 1977?”

Men who answer yes to this question are indefinitely deferred from donating blood. There are strong opinions both for and against this donation criterion.

Canadian Blood Services Board of Directors is currently reviewing the MSM deferral policy. CBS is committed to involve stakeholders as we evaluate the deferral. Liaison committees have a keen interest in providing input into the review.

Three-step consultation strategy was approved by the Board of Directors in February 2007.
Step 1
- Group consultation with high interest groups took place April 16, 2007
- Participants included: EGALE, Canada; Canadian Federation of Medical Students; Canadian AIDS Society; Seven Oaks Teachers Assoc. (MB); Canadian Immunodeficiencies Patient Org.; Canadian Hemophilia Society; Thalassemia Foundation of Canada

Step 2
Consultation with National Liaison Committee on April 20, 2007

Step 3
Follow-up with participants
Result of consultation - life time deferral would likely be reviewed. Specifics cannot be provided at this point because the comments will be forwarded directly to the Board (May16-18). A decision will be made after that meeting.
A careful well developed communication tool will be developed to announce the decision. Whatever the decision may be it is expected that there will be unhappy individuals /sectors.

Questions during the presentation:
- What do other countries do?
  According to PJ, US and Canada have the same deferral criteria. A few other countries have a 5-year deferral and there are some who have 1-year deferral.
- Are these countries also reviewing this policy - US, UK perhaps?
  Yes. The US has been doing their reviews. FDA recently turned down request for 1-year deferral, according to PJ.

4.7 **Hong Kong method of bacterial testing**
Rita B. presented the Hong Kong Method of Bacterial Detection (attached). One of the leading causes of transfusion related fatalities is bacterial contamination. Units become contaminated with bacteria through the following:
- Asymptomatic donor bacteremia
- Contamination with skin flora*
- Defects in blood
- Thawing in contaminated water
* What we can control is infection with the skin; all the others are beyond our control.

When looking more specifically at bacterial contamination of products it is estimated that the risk is as follows:

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<th>RBCs</th>
<th>Platelets</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bacterial Contamination</td>
<td>1/10,000 units</td>
<td>1/2,000 units</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bacterial Infection</td>
<td>1/100,000 units</td>
<td>1/10,000 transfusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal Bacterial Infection</td>
<td>1/500,000 units</td>
<td>1/20-40,000 transfusions</td>
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The increased risk to bacterial contamination of platelets is largely due to the fact that platelets are stored at room temperature as opposed to red cells which are stored at 1°C to 6°C.

One of the ways to minimize the risk of bacterial contamination is to detect the presence of bacterial contamination. Buffy Coat has its own system for bacterial detection in platelets. However, this is implemented only in Edmonton and BC/Y as they are the only sites doing Buffy coat. Since the roll out of the Buffy Coat to other centres is delayed, the Hong Kong method of bacterial detection was implemented in the rest of the CBS sites.

Why was the Hong Kong method chosen? This is the best system of bacterial detection in the world. Rita B. continued to describe in detail the procedure of the Hong Kong method.
- If bacterial growth is detected, the system will alarm immediately
- A recall is performed for all platelets including the corresponding red cells and plasma
- If any of the components have been transfused, the physician on call immediately notifies that patient’s attending physician
- The culture bottle and a component from each implicated donor is sent for gram stain and identification of the organism
Once Buffy Coat is implemented in the centre, this method would be discontinued.

5.0 Member Feedback & Questions

Each member was given the opportunity to provide relevant updates from member organizations or comments/feedback about RLC.

Lynda P. enjoyed the Centre tour.

Stephanie P. shared her challenges with Donor recruitment in her field. She is finding it more difficult to recruit new people at work. She works with a construction company so people are always out on the job site. She especially liked the Beauty of Blood ads.

Joe M. was pleased and impressed with the group and the fact that action items from previous meeting were actually being followed up on.

Robin H. enjoys the meetings. He learns a lot, something new in each meeting. He suggested to implement the P4L database in Lethbridge (recruit them to be Donors for life at least a few of them). He noted that CBS really puts an emphasis in the safety of the blood system so he walks away comfortable that there is a good system in place.

Dave D. enjoys the face to face meeting; disappointed that we’re missing some of the recipient groups. He says, maybe we could push a little harder to get them in attendance. He asked if a Saturday meeting can be an option that the group would like to take.

**Action:** DK will send out an email to all members to ask if a Saturday face to face meeting will work for the members.

6.0 Future Topics for Discussion

The following topics were suggested for discussion in the future:

- Elementary School Program
- Blood Cords
- Any other tools or suggestions to ensure success for recruitment

7.0 Proposed Meeting Dates for upcoming year

Future Dates for RLC meetings:
- September 26 (5-8PM) Wednesday via Teleconference
- January 16, 2008 (5-8PM) Wednesday via Teleconference

It was decided by the group that the current meeting format/frequency will be maintained: Teleconference meetings - 2x/year; Face to Face meetings - 1x/year

**Action:** For the next face to face meeting in 2008, DK will conduct a quick poll among the members, suggesting 2 Saturdays and 2 Fridays. Objective is to find out which day would be a better option to the majority of the members.

Adjournment 3:40 PM