

# A B C N E W S L E T T E R CURRENT EVENTS AND TRENDS IN BLOOD SERVICES

# EVENTS AND TRENDS IN BLOOD SERVICES

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#### 2018 #39

#### November 16, 2018

**Please Note:** The *ABC Newsletter* will not be published on November 23<sup>rd</sup> due to the Thanksgiving holiday. We will resume regular publication the following week. Thank you for your continued interest!

### **California Wildfires Impacting the Blood Community**

As the wildfires in California continue to burn, the devastation left in their wake remains including more than 60 deaths as of Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>. The tragedy has displaced many more as a result of damage and/or mandatory evacuations.

This particularly hits close to home for the blood community as some employees at ABC member blood centers Northern California Community Blood Bank and Vitalant (formerly BloodSource) have been displaced as their homes and possessions were destroyed and their lives disrupted.

While fixed site locations have been spared thus far, the impact of the fires continues to alter operations as drives have been canceled and some fixed site locations temporarily closed. Currently, the blood needs of blood centers in the region are being met. The AABB Interorganizational Task Force on Domestic Disasters and Acts of Terrorism is monitoring the situation and any needs of affected blood centers.

ABC will keep members informed with additional updates as they become available. Vitalant's West Division President Steve Ferraiuolo issued the following message earlier this week:

In the past week, throughout California, Vitalant has been impacted by recent tragedies ranging from the deadly mass shooting in Thousand Oaks to the fires that continue to burn in both ends of the state. As of last count, the Woolsey and Hill fires in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties have burned over 100,000 acres, claimed two lives, and destroyed nearly 450 structures with another 57,000 remaining in danger. In the north end of the state, the Camp Fire has burned 135,000 acres, claimed 56 lives (with over 100 people still missing) and nearly 9,000 structures; 7,600 of them homes (including the homes of four Vitalant teammates in Northern California). Both fires continue to burn, and as we look out our windows throughout the division, we can see the impact on the air quality.

While I have been incredibly saddened by these events, I have also been incredibly inspired by the selfless resiliency of the human spirit that has been on display. I

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#### Wildfires Impact Blood Community (continued from page 1)

have heard numerous stories of staff offering to open their homes and bring in basic supplies to help their colleagues and friends who have been displaced by the fires. I have witnessed staff working incredibly long hours and troubleshooting logistics to ensure that our mission is fulfilled. Throughout all of the adversity, patient needs continue to be met. I know there are individuals all around us who are discussing additional ideas on how to support our communities. In spite of the tragedies going on around us, those patients – whether suffering an acute need due to an unforeseen trauma, or an ongoing need to support chemotherapy treatments – and their families never have to worry whether or not blood will be there for them.

With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, and the holiday season nearly upon us, while it may seem at odds with what we are experiencing around us, I am incredibly grateful. I am grateful for the outpouring of generosity and human kindness I am seeing from our teammates throughout the Vitalant family, from our colleagues around the nation and the community members who continue to make their way into our blood drives and donor centers to ensure patient needs are met. For those wishing to help, there are a number of agencies collecting donations for those impacted by the wildfires, including those listed below:

#### Paradise, CA:

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- <u>North Valley Community Foundation</u> (1% to administration/management of funds)
- American Red Cross Disaster Services
- <u>United Way: To donate to United Way of Northern California</u>, or text BUTTEFIRE to 91999

#### Ventura, CA:

• <u>Ventura County Community Foundation</u> - Hill Fire/Woolsey Fire Sudden and Urgent Needs Effort Fund to support the immediate needs of community nonprofit organizations serving those affected by the wildfires.

<u>American Red Cross Disaster Services</u>

### Upcoming ABC Webinars – Don't Miss Out!

- **\*Quality Integration Part II** November 27<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm. EST. Additional details and registration instructions are available to ABC Member in <u>MCN 18-047</u>.
- **SMT Journal Club** December 12<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm. EST. Additional details forthcoming!

\*Please note: Part II participation is independent of Part I.

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ABC advocates for and advances policies that promote the role of independent blood centers in providing life-saving blood products and recognize the continuous need for a safe and robust blood supply. ABC exists to advocate for laws and regulations recognizing the essential role that independent blood centers play in the healthcare system; promote partnerships, policies and programs that increase awareness about the need for blood donation; and serve as a thought-leader in the advancement of evidence-based medical and scientific solutions related to health and safety. America's Blood Centers

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## Report to Congress by Tick-borne Disease Working Group Published

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act established a Tick-borne Disease Working Group (TBDWG) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in the face of the increasing incidence of infections transmitted by ticks "to review current research efforts and help identify priorities related to tick-borne disease." This week, they released their 2018 <u>report</u> to Congress.

It describes the TBDWG and its methods, reviews the epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of these infections with an emphasis on Lyme disease (infection by *Borrelia burgdorferi*). Additional sections include discussions of access to and accessibility of care, clinical outcomes, and future directions. Recommendations are provided after each of the eight chapters. These call mainly for appropriate funding levels for surveillance and control relative to other emerging and established infections, research to address the many gaps described in the report and its dissemination to stakeholders (including researchers, clinicians, patients, and the public).

The executive summary states that, "advanced technologies and systematic studies are also needed to rapidly identify new disease agents that pose emergent risks to public health, including to the blood supply." Recommendation 6.3 suggests the need to "improve the education and research on transmission (including transmission via the blood supply and pregnancy) and treatment of other tick-borne diseases and coinfections." Transmissions of babesiosis, anaplasmosis, bartonellosis, ehrlichiosis, and rickettsioses by transfusion are mentioned in several chapters, but there is no extended discussion of the relative scope of that route of transmission for any of the organisms, citation of relevant transfusion medicine references nor specific recommendations for blood supply interventions. The legislation establishing the TBDWG requires triennial reporting. Additional information about the report and the TBDWG are available of the HHS <u>website</u>.

(Source: Tick-borne Disease Working Group 2018 Report to Congress, 11/14/18)





# America's Blood Centers<sup>®</sup> It's About Life. INSIDE ABC

The programs and services described in the Inside ABC section are available to ABC member blood centers and their staff only, unless otherwise specified.

## ABC Awards of Excellence Call for Nominations

ABC members are encouraged to nominate blood donation sponsors, corporations, and advocates for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Awards of Excellence*. This year's ceremony on Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> will be in Washington, D.C. during ABC's 57th Annual Meeting at the Ritz-Carlton (Pentagon City). Nominations are currently open until Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. Additional details are available in <u>MCN 18-044</u>. The online submission form is available <u>here</u>. ABC members are permitted to submit up to three nominations per category. The following awards will be presented during the awards ceremony and are currently open for nominations:

- ABC Outstanding Blood Drive of the Year
- Outstanding Public Relations Campaign
- Corporation of the Year Award
- Larry Frederick Award (jointly presented by ABC and ADRP)
- William Coenen President's Award
- Blood Community Advocate of the Year Award
- Thomas F. Zuck Lifetime Achievement Award

A complete description of each award is available <u>here</u>. Please direct any questions about nominations or the awards ceremony to <u>Leslie Maundy</u>.

(Source: MCN 18-044)

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## ADRP Conference 2019 Call for Speaker Abstracts Open

ADRP has opened the call for abstracts for its 2019 Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Ind. Marketing, communications, recruitment, and collections professionals and experts are invited to <u>submit</u> abstracts to share their expertise. The deadline to submit is Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. Speakers that are chosen will receive a 30 percent discount off conference registration. This year will feature speaker panels, breakout sessions, and roundtable discussions. Interested individuals can submit their abstracts <u>here</u>.



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## ADRP Award Nominations Are Open

Recognize a peer or outstanding donor group by nominating them for an <u>ADRP Award</u>. Submissions are being accepted until Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup> via the online <u>nomination form</u>. This year's categories include:

- Donor Recruiter of the Year
- Donor Collections Team Member of the Year
- Leader of the Year (Recruitment & Collections)
- Franzmeier Lifetime Achievement Award
- Gilcher MD/CEO Award
- Media Partner Award
- Blood Drive Award (Creative & Most Productive)
- School Blood Drive Award
- Humanitarian Service Award

### **RESEARCH IN BRIEF**

**Clinical impact of platelet transfusion thresholds in the neonatal ICU.** A multicenter randomized controlled trial in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands compared a liberal vs. restrictive platelet count trigger for prophylactic platelet transfusions. It found more transfusion and worse outcomes with the liberal trigger. Six hundred-sixty of 3,731 thrombocytopenic premature infants were randomized to transfusion at either <50,000 platelets/µL or <25,000. Ninety percent of the babies in the liberal arm received platelets compared to 53 percent in the restrictive group. The primary outcome of a major hemorrhage or death within 28 days of randomization occurred in 26 percent vs. 19 percent in the liberal and restrictive arms respectively (odds ratio 1.57, 95 percent confidence bounds 1.06-2.32). Serious adverse events were not different. The explanation of the difference is not immediately apparent, but the authors speculate about the roles of recognized immunological and inflammatory effects of platelets, distinct from their role in hemostasis, among other possible pathogenic explanations.

**Citation:** Curley, A., Stanworth, S.J., Willoughby K. *et al.* Randomized trial of platelet transfusion thresholds in neonates. *N. Engl. J. Med.* doi: <u>10.1056/NEJMoa1807320</u>.

**Should there be more laboratory monitoring of direct-acting oral anticoagulants (DOACs)?** DOACs (e.g. direct thrombin and factor Xa inhibitors) are rapidly replacing warfarin and other vitamin K antagonists for anticoagulation in a variety of clinical indications. They are easier to use, more predictable, and require less monitoring than the older agents. However, blood bankers are very familiar with the uncertainty surrounding the use of these drugs when hemorrhage complicates their use or a patient on them requires emergent invasive procedures and their reversal is anticipated. The tests in development for monitoring their effect are described along with potential clinical applications. Data on the clinical utility of the assays are confined to small, relatively low-quality studies. While none of the available tests are yet cleared for use in the U.S., one can anticipate their availability in the near future.

Citation: Connors, J.M. Testing and monitoring direct oral anticoagulants. Blood. 2018.

### **ABC Calendar of Events**

ABC offers a variety of meetings, workshops and virtual opportunities for education and networking as well as participation in ABC business. The <u>calendar of events</u> includes annual and summer meetings, board meetings, workshops, and webinars, and details will be updated as confirmed. We look forward to your support and participation!



## **RECENT REVIEWS**

ABC Newsletter

**Thrombopoietin receptor agonists in aplastic anemia.** The clinical development additive effects of these agents (e.g. eltrombopag) with immunosuppression in aplastic anemia, up to and including transfusion independence and remission, is described. Contributory mechanisms of action are enumerated, and future inclusion of additional agents is considered.

Citation: Scheinberg, P. Activity of eltrombopag in severe aplastic anemia. Blood Advances. 2018.

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASE UPDATES**

#### EBOLA

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is ongoing. The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have not classified the affected areas as having "widespread transmission of Ebola virus," which would trigger donor interventions in the U.S. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) <u>guidance</u> requires that "in the event that one or more countries is classified by CDC as having widespread transmission of Ebola virus, your donor history questionnaire (DHQ), including your full-length and abbreviated DHQ, and accompanying materials, must incorporate elements to assess prospective donors for symptoms of recent or current illness with Ebola virus infection or disease, and travel to, or residence in, an area endemic for Ebola virus in accordance with 21 CFR 630.10(e)(2)."

As of November 13<sup>th</sup>, there were 341 reports (303 confirmed and 38 probable) in the DRC provinces of North Kivu and Ituri.



Confirmed and probable Ebola virus disease cases by week of illness onset, data as of November 13th (n=341)

\*Data in recent weeks are subject to delays in case confirmation and reporting, as well as ongoing data cleaning. Trends during this period should be interpreted cautiously.

(Ebola virus disease – Democratic Republic of the Congo, 11/15/18) •



## WORD IN WASHINGTON

**ABC** Newsletter

The President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR) reauthorization bill (H.R. 6551) passed in the House this week and will head to the Senate. The current bill would reauthorize PEPFAR for five more years and was cosponsored by Reps. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) and Barbara Lee (D-Calif.). "[S]ince 2003 the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or 'PEPFAR,' has saved an estimated 16 million lives, and 13 countries today are on track to control their HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2020," said Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) during a speech on the House Floor before the vote. "Before PEPFAR, only some 50,000 people in Africa had access to lifesaving antiretroviral treatment. That number has since increased to approximately 14 million people receiving treatment for HIV and AIDS," Smith said. "Thanks to antiretrovirals, some 2.2 million babies have been born HIV-free to HIV positive mothers. Since the start of PEPFAR new HIV infections have declined between 41-76 percent. And again, more than 16 million lives have been saved." PEPFAR began under President George W. Bush as a program to assist with HIV treatment and prevention in dozens of developing countries and has received \$80 billion in funding since its inception.

(Source: Rep. Chris Smith <u>Announcement</u>, 11/13/18)

## PEOPLE



**Betsy Bassis** has been appointed the new chief executive at NHS Blood and Transplant (United Kingdom). She most recently served as the chief operating officer at the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) in the United Kingdom for the past four years where she managed large scale information technology and complex transformation programs. She will be replacing Sally Johnson, OBE who has filled the chief executive role on an interim basis at NHS Blood and Transplant since July. "Betsy is highly motivated and enthusiastic about joining NHS Blood and Transplant with a clear focus on delivering a high-quality experience for our donors, patients, and their families, whilst also creating an engaging and motivating environment for all of us who work here," said NHS Blood and Transplant Chair Millie Banerjee in a news release. Prior to joining Defra, Ms. Bassis worked 12 years at Centrica/British Gas. "I am delighted to be

joining NHS Blood and Transplant – an organisation helping people do something extraordinary by donating blood, organs, stem cells, and tissues," said Ms. Bassis in a news release. "I am excited to support the NHS in delivering these essential services and look forward to working with colleagues and stakeholders to do so for the benefit of patients, donors, and their families."

(Source: NHS Blood and Transplant News Release, 11/16/18)

**Richard H. Aster, MD**, senior investigator at the Versiti Blood Research Institute will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from *BizTimes* (Milwaukee, Wis.). Dr. Aster will be honored during the annual Health Care Heroes Awards on December 14<sup>th</sup>. His research contributions include examining the body's reaction to platelets and was instrumental in "pioneering" the first marrow transplant for a leukemia patient from an unrelated donor. "[Dr. Aster] is a true health care pioneer," said Fay Spano, director of communications at Versiti to *BizTimes*. "He is internationally recognized by his peers as a visionary researcher and physician for his advancements in transfusion medicine and particularly in platelet and immunohema-



Photo courtesy of BizTimes

tology research." Dr. Aster's career at BloodCenter of Wisconsin, a part of Versiti, spans 48 years.

(Source: *BizTimes*, <u>BloodCenter of Wisconsin researcher to receive Lifetime Achievement Award</u>, 11/16/18) ♦



#### **MEMBER NEWS**



**Nebraska Community Blood Bank** recently held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the opening of its first Omaha-based facility. The distribution center will serve Omaha hospitals including Nebraska Medicine and Nebraska Methodist Hospital System. Nebraska Community Blood Bank plans to open a donor center on-site in the Spring of 2019.

(Source: Nebraska Community Blood Bank Announcement, 11/16/18)

**San Diego Blood Bank** is partnering with Stratify Genomics, Inc (Stratify) on a wellness initiative which will be used to help provide males with their risk for prostate cancer based on Stratify's Prompt Prostate Genetics Score Test (Prompt Test). "This collaboration is just another example of how the San Diego Blood Bank is shaping wellness in our community," said San Diego Blood Bank CEO David Wellis, PhD in a news <u>release</u>. "We continue to expand into the area of medical research and are excited to facilitate making the Prompt Test available to male blood donors in our community." According to the news release, Prompt Test "will be run" in laboratory space leased by Stratify at San Diego Blood Bank Headquarters. The blood bank collaborated with Stratify for both "development" and "performance characteristics" of the screening test. "Stratify is proud to partner with San Diego Blood Bank to launch the Prompt Test for predisposition to prostate cancer" said Stratify President Martyn Gross in a news release. "Partnering allows us to launch our test efficiently and effectively without burdening the company with high capital expenses. This means more men can make potentially life-saving decisions sooner."

(Source: San Diego Blood Bank News <u>Release</u>, 11/15/18) •

### **GLOBAL NEWS**

Canadian Sen. Pamela Wallin (I-Saskatchewan) has introduced legislation that would prohibit the collection of plasma from remunerated donors in Canada. Bill S-252, entitled the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, would cease the operations of organizations such as Canadian Plasma Resources, which has two collection facilities in Canada that incentivize donors with prepaid gift cards that escalate in value, topping out at \$80, based on the frequency of plasma donation to encourage repeat donors. Sen. Wallin believes that incentivized donation poses a risk to the blood supply from the standpoint of safety and reducing the number of volunteer blood donors, "[w]e need to remind people what happened in the country and why Justice Krever said, 'Please, please, please keep this a public, accountable system, do not go in the other direction.' He was very passionate about that," said Sen. Wallin to CBC News. "I think it's fair to say they're exploiting people who are in need of money and that should be an ethical question, a moral question for all of us. We need to get this back on the radar." Currently, Canadian Plasma Resources has approval to collect plasma from Canadian donors only in New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, however the plasma is shipped abroad and not permitted for use within Canada. Their president and CEO Barzin Bahardoust, PhD told CBC News that "[t]his criticism is definitely not based on facts. This is definitely not a safety risk. We collect plasma for manufacturing. It's not blood or plasma that is used for direct transfusion into patients. This is a distinct procedure." He believes the concerns of the Krever Inquiry, which recommended a completely voluntary collection system for blood and blood products in Canada following the HIV crisis, should not be applied to the collection of plasma for further manufacture with today's advancements in technology, "[h]ow we are doing things right now

## GLOBAL NEWS (continued from page 8)

[is] very different, including the advancement of how we test the plasma ... and the steps we take to inactivate or remove infectious agents, including viruses" According to CBC News, the Canadian Plasma Resources envisions opening a manufacturing facility in Canada eventually, and 18 applications for approval of plasma collection sites throughout the country by additional organizations are being weighed by regulators.

(Source: CBC News, 'The situation is shocking': Senator leads charge against for-profit blood collection, 10/21/18)



## STOPLIGHT<sup>®</sup>: Status of America's Blood Centers' Blood Supply

www.AmericasBlood.org

## **CALENDAR**

Note to subscribers: Submissions for a free listing in this calendar (published in the last issue of each month) are welcome. Send information to Leslie Maundy by e-mail (Imaundy@americasblood.org) or by fax to (202) 899-2621. (For a more detailed announcement in the weekly "Meetings" section of the newsletter, please include program information.)

#### 2018

Nov. 29-30. FDA Pathogen Reduction Technologies for Blood Safety Public Workshop, Silver Spring, Md. More details available here.

Dec. 6. FDA's Oncology Center of Excellence Product Development in Hemophilia Public Workshop, Silver Spring, Md. More details available here.

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#### <u>Calendar</u> (continued from page 9)

2019

Feb. 4-5. 15<sup>th</sup> Annual FDA and the Changing Paradigm for HCT/P Regulation, Washington, D.C. More details available <u>here</u>.

March 6-7. IPFA 4th Asia Workshop on Plasma Quality and Supply, Hanoi, Vietnam. More details available here.

March 22. 2019 International Blood Safety Forum, Washington, D.C. More details coming soon.

March 23-26. 2019 ABC Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. More details coming soon.

May 14-16. ADRP Annual Conference, Indianapolis, Ind. More details available here.

May 22-23. IPFA/PEI 26th International Workshop on "Surveillance and Screening of Blood-Borne Pathogens", Krakow, Poland. More details available here.

#### **CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING**

Classified advertisements, including notices of positions available and wanted, are published free of charge for a maximum of three weeks per position per calendar year for ABC institutional members. There are charges for non-members: \$139 per placement for *ABC Newsletter* subscribers and \$279 for non-subscribers. A six (6) percent processing fee will be applied to all credit card payments. Notices ordinarily are limited to 150 words. To place an ad, contact Leslie Maundy at the ABC office. Phone: (202) 654-2917; fax: (202) 899-2621; e-mail: <u>lmaundy@americasblood.org</u>.

#### POSITIONS

Clinical Laboratory Scientist. Located in the heart of the magnificent coastal redwoods of Northern California, The Northern California Community Blood Bank is a nonprofit blood bank serving Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. The Northern California Community Blood Bank has an immediate opening for a Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS). This is a full-time, fully benefitted position. The Northern California Community Blood Bank offers a low-stress environment, excellent work-life balance, and the opportunity to advance your professional development while working for an employer with a vibrant community relationship. The Clinical Laboratory Scientist is responsible for activities related to processing, testing, storage, transportation, and other handling of blood and blood products. The Clinical Laboratory Scientist performs reference immunohematological testing and participates in training, validation, implementation of new procedures, and compliance with regulatory and standard-setting agencies. Experience, Education and Licensure: Four-year degree from an accredited college or university in science, medical technology or a related field. Valid current CA license as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist. Experience preferred but will train a motivated new CLS. To apply, contact: Jo Anna Ow, Administrative Services, Northern California Community Blood Bank, 2524 Harrison Avenue, Eureka, CA 95501; (707) 443-8004.

Director, Donor Recruitment. LifeStream (San Bernardino, CA) located 60 miles east of Los Angeles and 50 miles west of Palm Springs seeks qualified applicants for its Director, Donor Recruitment position. This position is responsible for developing and directing the blood center's donor recruitment department/plans to achieve collection goals. Scope of responsibilities includes oversight of all mobile and fixed site recruitment. Requires the ability to oversee the daily operations, as well as strategically work toward the long-term goals. Must be able to facilitate all operational activities related to recruitment of donors and management of recruitment staff within the expected budget guidelines. Must be an effective leader and have the ability to adapt to change. Excellent salary (with bonus program) and benefits including relocation package. Bachelor's degree required. Demonstrated experience in sales/territory management skills, strong leadership and team building skills, excellent verbal and written communication and public speaking skills and computer literacy. Prior blood center experience preferred. Minimum three years management experience. Successful candidate must demonstrate ability to work closely with Marketing and Collections Managers/Directors to facilitate efficient and effective blood drives. This position reports to the Vice President/Operations. LifeStream is an Equal Opportunity Employer, M/F/D/V. Apply online at: https://www.lstream.org/careers/.