

To: Transfusion Services Managers
From: Hospital Relations
Date: February 1, 2023
Re: Ice Storm and the Platelet Supply

Background

The winter ice storm has severely limited our operations resulting in zero collections. Even one day without collections causes significant impact to the blood supply, and we are now experiencing multiple days with no collections. Of particular concern, is the platelet supply. Platelets collected on Monday, January 30th will be available for release Thursday, February 2nd however, with the early closure on Monday, we expect minimal platelets to be available.

After Thursday, there will not be another release of room temperature platelets until Monday, February 6th. We are asking you to take the following actions to ensure that platelets are available for emergent transfusion needs.

We are also experiencing transport delays and limited courier services. Hazardous driving conditions has impacted distribution operations. As a reminder, your facility may elect to use its own courier service.

Impact to Clients

- Platelet rotations will be suspended until further notice.
- If an order is needed for imminent transfusion, please communicate the urgency to hospital services.
- We are actively searching for platelets; however, import opportunities are limited.
- Red cell standing orders may be discontinued until the supply is deemed stable.
- The O negative red cell supply is at critical levels.

Client Action Required

- Maintain expired platelets at proper storage for transfusion.
- Please do not discard expired platelets as those may be the only option for transfusion.
- Please consult with your medical director and prepare to transfuse expired platelets when no other option is available.
- Please be prepared to accept cold-stored platelets.
- Notify appropriate staff as applicable. Implement a triage process to help manage the supply. Please be prepared to cancel elective procedures if the supply is not sufficient to support.
- Please cooperate with hospital services as all blood orders will be triaged.
- Be prepared to release red cells or platelets to meet trauma and/or definite transfusion needs *elsewhere* as the blood center inventory may not be able to support.

- The need will be critical. Please encourage family, friends and colleagues to donate blood once normal operations resume.

Questions and Additional Information:

Your understanding of the difficulties our program has faced during these trying times has been sincerely appreciated and we are grateful for the partnerships that we enjoy with you in the service of your patients.

Please contact hospitalrelations@carterbloodcare.org with any concerns.