



To: Transfusion Services Managers
From: Hospital Relations
Date: May 15, 2024
Re: **Critical Level for O Rh-Negative Red Cells**

Background

Maintaining an optimal level of O Rh-negative red blood cells is a consistent challenge. This blood type is requested at a rate of approximately thirteen percent of all blood types even though the local donor population is nine percent group O Rh-negative. Carter BloodCare strives to maximize O negative collections using apheresis technology. However, we are now at a **critical O Rh-negative level** because demand outpaces projected collections.

Client Action Required

- If an order is needed for imminent transfusion, please communicate the urgency to hospital services to triage the order appropriately.
- O Rh-negative red cells included in red cell rotation and standing orders could be postponed or cancelled until the supply is deemed stable and will be stocked at minimal levels.
- Please maintain your O Rh-negative stock inventory at minimal levels.
- Please include crossmatched units in your stock inventory quantity.
- Please consider releasing O Rh-negative crossmatched units 24 hours after procedure.
- Please consider crossmatching the same O Rh-negative unit to multiple patients.
- Facilities should have a policy for use of Rh-positive red cells in Rh-negative or unknown blood type individuals to preserve the limited O negative red blood cell supply. Please see [AABB's recommendations on the Use of Group O Red Blood Cells](#).
- Notify appropriate staff and medical director as applicable.
- Please encourage family, friends, and colleagues to donate blood. The following toolkit is available for your use to help drive awareness and blood donations. [Carter BloodCare Critical Need Toolkit](#).

Questions and Additional Information:

Please contact hospitalrelations@carterbloodcare.org with any concerns.