



# Memorandum

**Date:** May 6, 2016  
**To:** Physicians Ordering Blood Products  
**From:** Dr. Leland Baskin, VP Medical Operations, Calgary Laboratory Services (CLS)  
**Re:** **National Blood Shortage Advisory for Group O Red Blood Cells**

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**Key Message:**

- Canadian Blood Services has declared a GREEN ADVISORY contingency activation for the National Plan for management of Blood and Blood Product Shortages for Group O (Positive and Negative) Red Cells only.
- All hospitals in Alberta have been directed to reduce inventory levels for Group O red cells by 10% to help balance the national inventory.

**Importance:**

- Blood conservation strategies and practices are required to aid in the re-establishment of normal national blood inventory levels.
- Full details of the National Plan can be found at [www.nacblood.ca](http://www.nacblood.ca) and the Alberta Blood Contingency Plan can be found at <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/Alberta-Blood-Contingency-Plan-2015.pdf>

**Action Required:**

- For patients requiring emergency transfusion, please ensure pre-transfusion testing is collected as soon as possible. Early identification of patient ABO blood group will enable the issuing of group-specific blood products and conserve Group O red cells.
- Please review the Choosing Wisely Canada Transfusion Medicine recommendations at <http://www.choosingwiselycanada.org/recommendations/transfusion-medicine/> to ensure best conservation practices.

**Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:**

Monica Phillips, Transfusion Medicine Manager, CLS @ 403-944-6670 or [monica.phillips@cls.ab.ca](mailto:monica.phillips@cls.ab.ca)

**This memorandum has been reviewed and approved by:**

Leland Baskin, MD, MS, FCAP, FACB, VP Medical Operations, Medical Director, Calgary Laboratory Services