

Statement for CBS Open Board Meeting, June 23, 2016 | Winnipeg, MB

The Network of Rare Blood Disorder Organizations is Canada's unified patient voice on matters of blood supply and safety. We represent those Canadians who actually use these products we are discussing - whose lives depend on plasma-based products, such as those living with Primary Immunodeficiency, Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura, and Hemophilia - and we are grateful for the chance to share at today's meeting.

This entire debate comes down to one simple choice: to make a decision based on evidence, or ideology.

Let's review the evidence:

- All evidence points to plasma products manufactured with paid plasma being of equal safety and quality compared to those made with non-compensated donations.
- There is no proof that paid plasma collection has a negative effect on voluntary blood donation.
- There has not been one incident of transmission of a blood-borne pathogen through a plasma product in Canada in over 25 years.
- 75 % of the plasma products currently used by Canadian patients are made with paid plasma from the United States, and global supply cannot keep up with increasing global demand for plasma.

With no safety risks, and no threats to the voluntary collection of blood, paid plasma can help with the global supply shortage, ensuring patients can access plasma products when they need them.

The NRBDO agrees that donation of fresh blood components, collected by a not-for-profit blood establishment such as Canadian Blood Services must remain voluntary and non-compensated. This is not up for debate, here or anywhere.

However **plasma products** are manufactured by for-profit multi-national corporations, and sold to the provinces and territories, just like any other drug. The confusion comes from the fact that they happen to be distributed by CBS and H-Q, but the manufacture and sale of plasma products is almost entirely a private, for-profit operation, with plasma being the main raw ingredient. To say that the compensated collection of this precious material puts our public health care system in peril is a stretch at best, and fear-mongering at worst.

The NRBDO is committed to ensuring the patient voice is heard, and working with CBS and H-Q to protect the safety and availability of blood products in Canada. Thank you.