



**GOING BEYOND  
AND ABOVE  
FOR QUEBECERS**



**2022-2023  
Annual Report**



# MISSION

**To efficiently  
meet the needs  
of the Québec  
population for quality  
blood and other  
biological products  
of human origin.**

# VISION

**To become a  
strategic partner  
for the Québec  
health system.**

# THE YEAR 2022-2023

# AT A GLANCE

**151,289**  
blood donors

**297,258**  
blood products delivered

**21,968**  
donors of plasma  
for fractionation

**452,302**  
stable products delivered

**55,561**  
enrolled individuals  
to the Stem Cell Donor  
Registry

**2,273**  
cord blood donors

**131**  
non-related transplants,  
including 18 cord blood  
transplants

**901**  
human tissue donors

**5,436**  
human tissues distributed

**1,387**  
mother's milk donors

**18,484**  
bottles of mother's  
milk distributed

**233,379**  
blood, plasma, stem cell, human  
tissue, and mother's milk donors

**773,611**  
products distributed  
(all donation types)

**1,677**  
employees

**THOUSANDS**  
of volunteers who generously  
contribute to our mission

**\$481 M**  
in annual revenues

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Héma-Québec's 2022-2023 Annual Report covers the fiscal year from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

# LEADERS' MESSAGE

## Serving Quebecers every day

Where do we start? As you will notice in reading this annual report, the past year has been an especially busy one with an abundance of topics. What draws the attention first is the large number of activities required in our ambitious 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

This is our second year reporting on the targets that we set for ourselves in this plan. We are moving forward at a good pace. While we can never lose sight of the enormous challenge posed by plasma self-sufficiency – which consumes much of our efforts! –, it is undeniable that all the players in Héma-Québec's ecosystem deserve our thanks for their ongoing work on many promising projects.

In particular, our thoughts turn to the implementation of the sole distributor mandate for human tissues, the digital transformation activities, and the realignment of quality requirements, without forgetting all the effort made to retain donors and volunteers and to recruit new ones, retain employees and attract new talent, and strengthen our position as a leading scientific player.

Our objectives are ambitious because, among other things, we feel that we have the right expertise to aim high and embark on major projects that will ensure the sustainability of our organization.

### The mission above all

If we have the means to achieve our ambitions, it is also because of the high quality of our relationships with government agencies and hospitals.

Héma-Québec continues to be proud of its role as a key partner in the health care system and is heartened by the excellent collaboration and support that it receives from all the network's players. This close collaboration with government agencies and all professionals in the health care field confirms that we are headed in the right direction.

An example of our progress in achieving our strategic objectives – and a major achievement of the past year – is the opening of the Saint-Bruno Donor Centre, which is already successful.

Also worthy of mention is the signing of a large number of collective agreements with our unionized employees. We know that this process was a demanding one for all the parties involved who are committed to Héma-Québec's mission. These new agreements enable us to look to the future and put our collective energy into pursuing our inspiring mission. We wish to recognize the work of all our employees and managers who maintained essential services for Quebecers during the bargaining process.

### Promising projects

Another key achievement of the past year was Héma-Québec's adoption of gender neutral questionnaires for plasma, blood and platelet donors last fall. This decision enabled Héma-Québec to eliminate the three-month exclusion period for men who have sex with men. Eligibility to donate is now based on an individual assessment of risk behaviours rather than on belonging to a targeted group.

This new more inclusive approach, which ensures the safety of products transfused into patients in need, firmly places Héma-Québec among a group



of international leaders in its sector of activity. It is also part of our commitment to social responsibility and is in keeping with the actions we have taken since 2013, with the approval of Health Canada, regarding donations by men who have sex with men. Making this humanitarian act even more inclusive and accessible to a greater number of people, without regard to their sex, gender or sexual orientation, is a major step forward.

During the course of the past year, we also implemented our telework policy, which was the result of a process of collaboration and discussion. The policy is characterized by a high degree of flexibility, ranging from the occasional presence in the workplace, upon request, to daily work in the office or a hybrid of both, when the job allows.

After this report, how can we keep ourselves from looking optimistically on the future ahead of us? In fall 2023, Héma-Québec will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

This celebration will be a golden opportunity for us to highlight the support of all the people who have contributed to our mission for a quarter century and to shed even more light on all our sectors of activity, some of which will benefit from being better known by the public. What they all have in common is the role they play in our grand mission to save lives. At Héma-Québec, we take this mission deeply to heart

every day. Soon we will be marking 25 years in the service of Quebecers. You can be sure that we are not lacking for projects or the will to continue doing better for them.

We are privileged to be able to count on passionate people who actively participate in the human chain that is Héma-Québec: our donors, all our staff, our volunteers, our partners in the health care system and blood drives, as well as the members of our board of directors. A heartfelt thank-you to each and everyone of you!

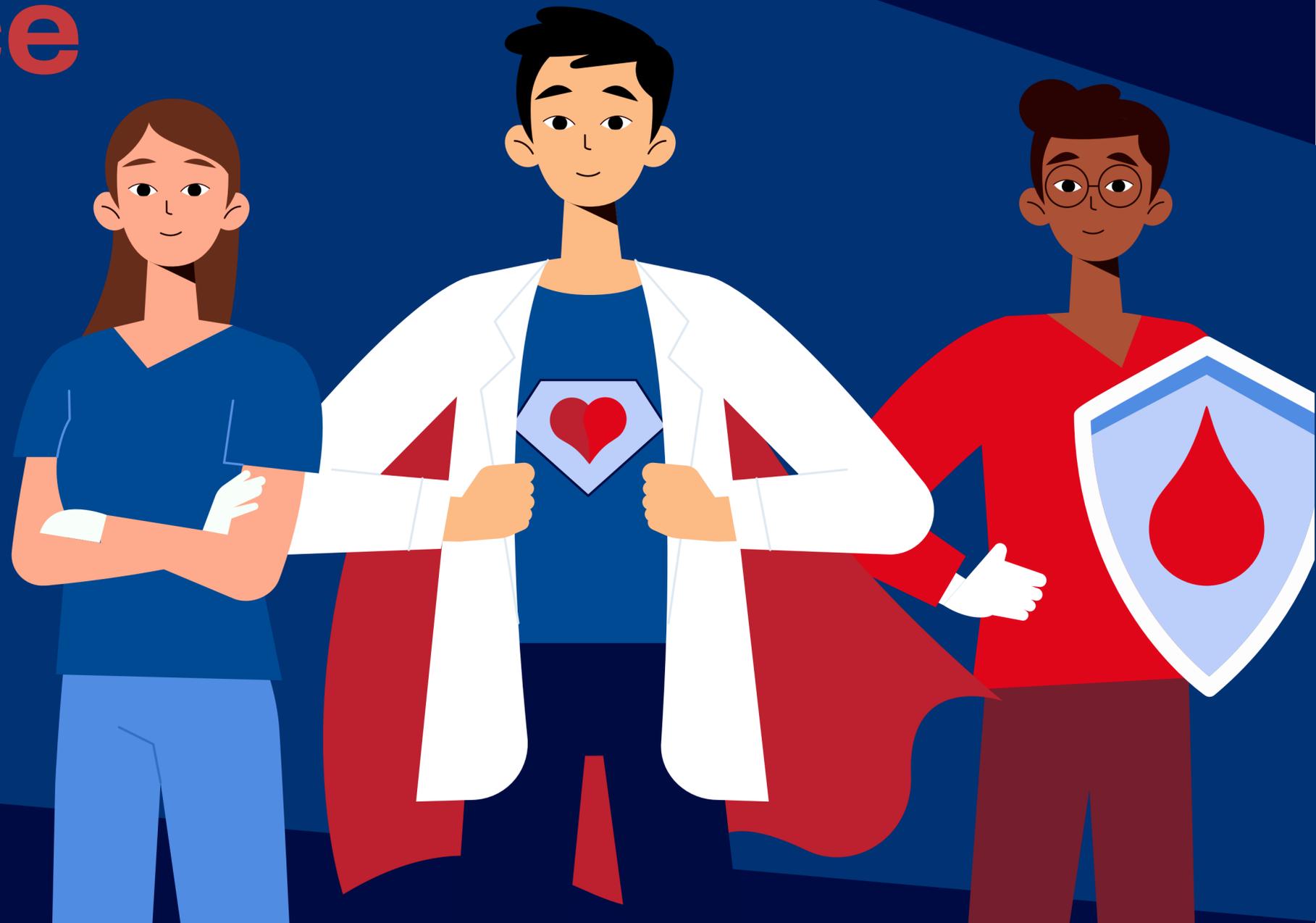
**Anne Bourhis**  
Chair of the Board of Directors

**Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

# Héma-Québec, a workplace of choice

## All committed to saving lives

Every day, we work together to save lives! Shaped by a common mission of humanity, our work environment is based on respect, openness and collaboration. This is why the well-being and aspirations of our employees is at the heart of the directions that guide us. In short, by taking care of our people, we enable them to take care of others by contributing to the cause of the gift of life!



## Employees dedicated to a noble cause

Some 1,670 members of our team share a deep respect for the mission, and a passion and dedication that is constantly renewed. We tip our hat to their outstanding commitment!

## OUR VALUES

- **INTEGRITY/HONESTY** • **RESPECT** • **COMMITMENT**
- **EMPOWERMENT**

## A work environment of growth

Héma-Québec promotes equal job opportunities and encourages the internal mobility of talented people. The employee experience is in evolution mode. By acting positively on the life of people, we strive to create a work environment that is as rewarding as it is stimulating, one in which the quality of human relationships holds an essential place. Listening and collaborating are the foundations on which our culture rests.

## Collaborative work methods adapted to the new reality

Héma-Québec has listened to its employees and provides broad work flexibility. Our telework policy allows for many possibilities, combining the occasional presence in the office with technological telework options, based on the employees' job and the needs of their department.

With offices in Montréal and Québec City and its 11 donor centres, Héma-Québec is an employer that is present in many regions. And telework now encourages hiring across Québec.



## A matter of benefits

Héma-Québec offers individuals who join its team conditions and a range of benefits that represent great added value:

- A complete social benefits program
- A defined benefit pension plan
- Four weeks vacation starting in the first year for most employees, in addition to statutory holidays and personal leave
- A personal work-life balance policy for many employees
- A well-established training and development program
- Reimbursement of a portion of academic courses, sports activities and public transit fees
- An integration program for new employees
- Various recognition programs for years of service, retirement and good deeds
- A telemedicine program accessible at all times

## For people and the planet

We take our responsibilities seriously and make our staff aware of the importance of acting in a spirit of social responsibility and sustainable development. In a desire to move forward even further, this approach is one of the organization's six priorities identified in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.



Our people are mobile  
and grow:

# 20%

## of jobs are filled internally.





## **An integrated organization. A variety of positions**

As a truly integrated business, all job functions intersect within Héma-Québec

- Blood Products and Mother's Milk
- Client Experience and Business Intelligence
- Corporate Secretariat, Risks and Auditing
- Finance and Infrastructure
- Information Technology and Digital Strategy
- Medical Affairs and Innovation
- People, Culture and Leadership
- Quality and Development
- Supply Chain
- Transfusional Medicine

The broad range of talent found here creates an extremely rich and inspiring environment where very diverse skills and expertise interact.

## **Training that enhances skills**

No one wants to just mark time. Our training programs give our employees the tools needed to enhance their professional career. Whether it is our four-step leadership program, regulatory training or professional development, we put everything in place to support our employees' expectations and ambitions.

## **Diversified and inclusive daily work**

Within our teams, diversity and inclusion are not mere abstract concepts. Today, 16% of our staff members come from ethnocultural minorities. Our policy of equity, inclusion and access to diversity guarantees equal opportunity for all, reflecting the openness and welcoming quality of our organization, which views differences as a true wealth. We focus first and foremost on skills and passion.

Our structure includes more than

# 400

**types of jobs and offers a vast array of opportunities**



**WE WANT TO  
BUILD THE FUTURE  
WITH COMPETENT,  
DIVERSIFIED AND  
MOBILIZED TEAMS.**

**Discover our stimulating careers [here](#).**

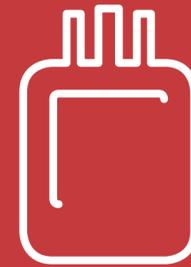
### **Building a career within the same organization**

I began my career as a lab technician at Héma-Québec 22 years ago. Several years later, I had the opportunity to join the IT team. That was a complete change! I had some experience as a systems user, but I was offered the required training to master my new field. I've always felt there was great openness and support for my choices. I've met wonderful people in my workplace and through my work on the social committee. It's stimulating to be part of such a diversified team.

– **Nathalie Desmeules**, IT Solutions Analyst

## SECTORS OF ACTIVITY

Héma-Québec's activities revolve around six major sectors.



### BLOOD PRODUCTS

Blood is the fluid that flows through the body's veins and arteries. It is made up of plasma, in which three types of cells are suspended: red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets.



### STABLE PRODUCTS

Stable products are medications that are manufactured primarily from plasma, the liquid part of blood that transports blood cells and nutrients in the body.



### STEM CELLS

Stem cells, found in bone marrow, peripheral (circulating) blood and umbilical cord blood, are the "parent" cells from which all other blood cells develop.



### HUMAN TISSUES

Human tissues – e.g., ocular tissues, heart valves, skin tissues, arterial tissues and musculoskeletal tissues – can be collected for transplantation purposes.



### MOTHER'S MILK

Collected mother's milk is particularly beneficial for infants born extremely preterm who cannot be breastfed by their mother. It reduces the risk of developing a serious intestinal disease.



### SPECIALIZED LABORATORY SERVICES

Héma-Québec provides specialized laboratory services to its Québec healthcare system partners. In this role, it is recognized as a referral centre in the field of transfusion medicine.



HÉMA-QUÉBEC

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied up, wearing a pink bow, holding a baby in a pink outfit. The woman is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall with a green plant on the left and a lamp on the right.

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN MEETING EXPECTATIONS

Accomplishments by activity sector

**Loraine,**  
cord blood donor

# BLOOD PRODUCTS

As the exclusive supplier of blood products in Québec, Héma-Québec is responsible for recruiting donors and for collecting, testing, processing and delivering products to hospitals.



**173,257**  
registered donors  
(all types of donations combined)



**210,927**  
whole blood donations



**1.61**  
whole blood donations  
on average per donor  
per year



**1,699**  
blood drives

**390,643**  
visits to collection sites  
(all types of donations combined)

**128,870**  
apheresis donations

**297,258**  
blood products delivered  
to hospitals

**BLOOD PRODUCTS**  
**FROM DONATION**  
**TO DISTRIBUTION**

**1. BLOOD DONATION**



The blood collection lasts about ten minutes. In addition to the blood bag, sample tubes are collected for testing.

**2. TRANSPORTATION**



The blood bags and samples are sent to one of Héma-Québec's laboratories.

**3. ANALYSES**



The samples are sent to a qualification lab to determine the donor's blood group and to screen for the presence of infections.

**4. SEPARATION OF BLOOD**



The blood is separated into its different components (red blood cells, platelets, plasma).

**5. STORAGE**



Compliant products are labelled and stored, ready to be sent to hospitals.

**6. DELIVERY**

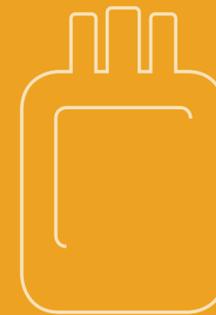


The products are delivered to hospitals. The components used vary depending on patients' needs.

**Every 80 seconds, someone in Québec needs blood. It may be following an accident, during surgery or to treat an illness. Just 3% of Québec's adult population gives blood.**

# STABLE PRODUCTS

Héma-Québec is the exclusive distributor of stable products for Québec. It is responsible for supply strategies, the purchase of medications manufactured primarily from plasma, inventory management and product distribution to hospitals. It also looks after donor recruitment, collection and testing, and sending a part of the plasma it collects for fractionation.



**132,954**  
litres of plasma destined  
for the manufacture of  
medications

**140,269** | **145,946**  
in 2020-2021 | in 2021-2022



**31%**  
intravenous (IVig)  
and subcutaneous (SCig)  
immunoglobulin  
self-sufficiency rate

**31%** in 2021-2022  
**28%** in 2020-2021

**21,968**  
registered plasma  
donors

**452,302**  
stable products  
delivered

STABLE PRODUCTS  
**FROM DONATION  
 TO DISTRIBUTION**

**1. PLASMA DONATION**



Plasma donations are collected in donor centres by appointment. The collection lasts approximately 45 minutes. Plasma can be donated every six days, up to 52 times a year.



**2. FREEZING**



Plasma is quickly frozen after collection. The faster it is frozen, the more protein can be extracted from it.



**3. ANALYSES**



Samples are sent to the qualification laboratory. All donations are tested.

**4. FRACTIONATION**



Plasma is sent to fractionation plants. These high-tech plants extract the proteins and use them to manufacture medications.



**5. RETURN OF PRODUCTS AND STORAGE**



The finished products are then returned to Héma-Québec and stored, ready for shipment to hospitals.



**6. DELIVERY**



The products are delivered to hospitals.

**Thousands of Quebecers need plasma-derived medications to treat various illnesses, including neurological disorders, immune deficiencies and other diseases, such as hemophilia. The drug manufacturing process can take up to 12 months.**

# STEM CELLS

## STEM CELL DONOR REGISTRY

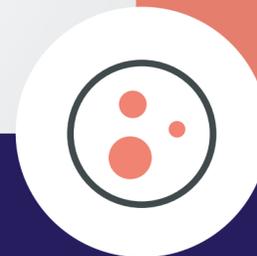
Héma-Québec is responsible for recruiting and qualifying donors, as well as managing the Stem Cell Donor Registry for Québec. This computerized registry contains the records of more than 55,000 enrolled individuals who have consented to donating if they are found to be compatible with a patient. Héma-Québec's Registry is certified as meeting the highest international standards and is part of the World Marrow Donor Association's (WMDA) global network, thus benefitting from access to more than 39 million potential stem cell donors.



**55,561**  
enrolled individuals  
to the Registry



**3,085**  
new  
registrations  
in 2022-2023



**131**

patients in Québec received an unrelated donor transplant (including 18 from cord blood)

**14**

donors in Québec donated stem cells (4 of these donations were destined for patients in Québec hospitals)

**541**

autologous peripheral stem cells distributed to hospitals

# STEM CELLS FROM REGISTRATION TO DONATION

## 1. REGISTRATION



Any person who qualifies can enroll in the Registry. They will then receive a buccal swab collection kit in the mail.

## 2. DETERMINATION OF GENETIC PROFILE AND ADDITION TO THE REGISTRY



Samples returned to Héma-Québec are used to determine the genetic profile of the potential donor, who is then added to the international registry.

## 3. CONFIRMATION OF COMPATIBILITY



If a person is potentially compatible with a patient, Héma-Québec conducts advanced tests to confirm their genetic compatibility with the patient.

## 4. PREPARING FOR THE DONATION



The potential donor undergoes a general physical examination to confirm whether their health status allows them to donate.

## 5. STEM CELL DONATION



If all conditions are met, the donation can take place. Two types of donations are possible: bone marrow or peripheral stem cells.

## 6. POST-DONATION FOLLOW-UP



The donor is followed up until full recovery.

**Some diseases cause the destruction or abnormal functioning of the bone marrow. The treatment of last resort consists of replacing the patient's stem cells with those of a healthy person. For some patients, stem cell transplants are the only chance of survival. For three out of four of them, there is no compatible donor in the family.**

# STEM CELLS

## PUBLIC CORD BLOOD BANK

Umbilical cord blood is very rich in stem cells. The Public Cord Blood Bank (PCBB) provides access to a complementary source of stem cells, other than those from bone marrow or peripheral blood. Like Héma-Québec's registry of adult donors, the PCBB is an integral part of the international registry of the World Marrow Donor Association. It is the first operational public cord blood bank in Canada.



**2,273**  
mothers enrolled



**12,157**  
units available for  
transplant



**9**  
partner hospitals  
(4 in operation)



**10**  
units distributed  
worldwide in 2022-2023  
(including 2 in Québec)

**202**  
units distributed  
worldwide  
since 2008



# CORD BLOOD FROM DONATION TO TRANSPLANTATION

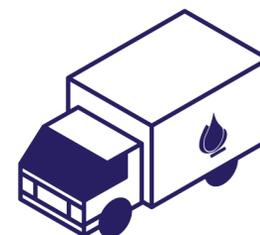
## 1. DONATION



Cord blood is collected after the birth of a baby in partner hospitals.



## 2. TRANSPORTATION



Cord is transported to Héma-Québec.



## 3. QUALIFICATION



Cord blood is qualified based on strict criteria.

## 4. PROCESSING AND STORAGE



Cord blood is processed, frozen at -150°C and stored for 15 years. The units of cord blood are made available to an international registry.



## 5. SEARCH FOR COMPATIBLE UNITS



When a call is received within Québec or elsewhere in the world, Héma-Québec conducts a search for a unit that is compatible with a patient awaiting a stem cell transplant.



## 6. TRANSPLANTATION



The patient is transplanted.

**While Héma-Québec is responsible for donor registration and qualification, the collection itself is done in partner hospitals. Upon receipt of the collected cord blood, Héma-Québec processes, analyzes and cryopreserves, or banks the cord blood units. Cord blood is rich in stem cells that are particularly valuable in the treatment of over 80 diseases.**

# HUMAN TISSUES

Héma-Québec manages the Public Human Tissue Bank for Québec. It is responsible for collecting, processing, qualifying and distributing human tissues to meet the needs of hospitals. One of the team's missions is to raise awareness among healthcare professionals of the importance of identifying and referring potential donors following their death.



**901**  
tissue donors



**5,374**  
donor referrals received



**5,436**  
tissues distributed to hospitals



## Human tissues collected by Héma-Québec



Ocular tissues (corneas and eyeballs)



Heart valves



Arterial tissues (for example, abdominal aortas, femoral arteries)



Cutaneous tissues (skin)



Musculoskeletal tissues (tendons and bone)

# HUMAN TISSUES FROM DONOR REFERRALS TO TRANSPLANTATION

## 1. DONOR REFERRAL



Health professionals refer donors to Héma-Québec.



## 2. CONSENT



Consent registries are checked. Whether the consent is entered in the registry or not, it is important for the donor to share their decision to consent to donating tissue with family members, since they are the ones who speak on behalf of the donor after death.



## 3. QUALIFICATION



Héma-Québec conducts a thorough evaluation to verify the donor's eligibility.

## 4. COLLECTION



Héma-Québec collects the tissues.



## 5. PROCESSING AND STORAGE



The tissues are processed and stored until they are transplanted. Most tissues can be preserved for up to five years, with the exception of corneas, which can be preserved only 14 days.



## 6. TRANSPLANTATION



The surgeon transplants the tissues. One donor of human tissues can help up to 20 people.

**One tissue donor can help up to 20 people, whether to restore sight with a corneal transplant or to treat serious burns using skin grafts.**

# MOTHER'S MILK

Héma-Québec operates the Public Mothers' Milk Bank for Québec. Its mandate is to provide pasteurized human milk to infants born preterm at 32 weeks' gestation or earlier who require medical care and whose mother cannot breastfeed. The organization is responsible for donor recruitment and qualification, the processing and analysis of milk, as well as its distribution to hospitals.



**1,387**  
registered  
donors



**18,484**  
bottles distributed



# MOTHER'S MILK FROM DONATION TO DISTRIBUTION

## 1. DONATION



Héma-Québec supplies bottles; mothers collect their milk at home and freeze it.

## 2. PICK-UP OR DROP-OFF



Depending on the region, the bottles of milk are collected at the donor's home or brought by the donor to a drop-off point.

## 3. POOLING OF DONATIONS



Héma-Québec mixes the donations of several donors by lot.

## 4. PASTEURIZATION



The milk is pasteurized to eliminate viruses and bacteria.

## 5. MICROBIOLOGICAL ANALYSES AND STORAGE



Héma-Québec tests the milk to ensure that it is safe for recipients. If the results are compliant, the milk is frozen and stored for one year from the date of the first donation.

## 6. DELIVERY



The milk is distributed to hospitals and destined for extremely preterm babies who cannot be breastfed by their mother.

**Each year in Québec, some 1,000 premature babies whose mother cannot breastfeed benefit from milk donated to Héma-Québec's Public Mothers' Milk Bank.**



# SPECIALIZED LABORATORY SERVICES

In addition to meeting the needs of the Québec population as a supplier of biological products of human origin, Héma-Québec provides specialized laboratory services to its Québec healthcare system partners. In this role, it is recognized as a referral centre in the field of transfusion medicine.



**30,083**  
tests conducted for Québec hospitals



**4,592**  
patient requests referred to the reference laboratories



**24,296**  
phenotyped packed red blood cells delivered to Québec hospitals

SPECIALIZED LABORATORIES

FROM REQUEST TO SPECIALIZED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1. REQUESTS AND SAMPLES



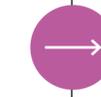
Health professionals send requests for testing and samples to the reference laboratories.



2. ANALYSES



Based on the type of request received, various tests may be performed, including identifying irregular antibodies, phenotyping, genotyping, and HLA typing.



3. REPORT



Once the tests are completed, the results are sent to the health professional who initiated the request.

4. SPECIALIZED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



Based on the results, the health professional contacts Héma-Québec to find an adult donor or cord blood units for stem cell transplantation, or to provide specialized products, such as phenotyped packed red blood cells, washed blood, rare blood or typed platelets.



5. SCREENING OF STEM CELL AND BLOOD PRODUCT DONORS



To ensure the supply of specialized products, the reference laboratories constantly perform screening tests of Stem Cell Registry donors, cord blood units and blood product donors to find a compatible person willing to donate.

**Specialized laboratory services provide solutions to complex transfusion medicine issues.**

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Innovation, continuous improvement  
and research



**Bruno,**  
volunteer

# IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE

## Donors and volunteers

### More inclusive donations of blood products

In March 2022, Héma-Québec obtained authorization from Health Canada to transition to a gender-neutral questionnaire for plasma donors, which came into effect on October 2, 2022. Its use was then extended to blood and platelet donations on December 4, 2022, again through an agreement with Health Canada. Donating blood products is now more inclusive in Québec, without affecting the safety of recipients. Héma-Québec commends this new more inclusive approach that places it firmly among the group of international leaders in its sector of activity.

This decision has enabled Héma-Québec to eliminate the three-month exclusion period for men who have sex with men and who are sexually active. Eligibility to donate blood products is now based on an individual evaluation of risk behaviours rather than an assessment of targeted groups. Anyone who is sexually active – regardless of their sex, gender and sexual orientation – can now donate if they have not had anal sex with a new partner or multiple partners in the preceding three months.

### Opening of a donor centre in Saint-Bruno

On October 31, 2022, Héma-Québec's Saint-Bruno Donor Centre welcomed its first visitors who came to donate blood and plasma. With its large windows, warm atmosphere and open spaces that make the work of the teams and the stay of the donors even more pleasant, the Saint-Bruno Centre is the 11th in the province and the second one to serve Montréal's South Shore. The centre is part of the organization's strategies to increase plasma self-sufficiency.

This facility will eventually accommodate all types of blood product donations. The centre will also highlight Héma-Québec's complete line of products. Located in the CF Promenades Saint-Bruno, a high-traffic shopping complex, the centre is close to two major highways and easily accessible by public transit.



The Saint-Bruno centre has been greatly successful with donors. As at March 31, there were 3,096 individuals who donated blood and plasma, including 2,363 who were one-time donors and 733 who had given more than once.

### More flexible model to book appointments

If the approach of booking appointments, adopted at the start of the pandemic, offers many benefits, it does not necessarily meet the expectations of all donors. This is why Héma-Québec decided to try a hybrid model for some blood drives, to attract passersby who simply drop in. We can thereby benefit from the predictability of appointments without closing the door to potential donors.

This new model proved especially useful in spring 2022 with the return of blood drives in schools (cégeps and universities), made possible by the easing of health measures. In this context, teams

reserved time slots for passersby, as if they had assigned virtual appointments to them in advance. Blood drives in schools were the ideal venue to implement this more flexible method since the appointment approach does not always meet the expectations of this type of clientele. Passersby are always accepted in our centres and blood drives when time slots are available.

### New option for appointment reminders by text message

In keeping with the goal of enhancing the donor experience, Héma-Québec has been offering the option of receiving an appointment reminder by text message since October 2, 2022. The milestone of 10,000 reminders sent by text message was reached in January 2023. By March 31, 2023, more than 18,000 reminders had been made to donors in this way.




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### Caring for new donors: a program that is bearing fruit

Implemented in 2020-2021, the program to care for new donors is aimed at retaining them by convincing them to adopt long-term donation habits and offering them a standard greeting process and communication targeted to all contact points, at the time of donating and during follow-ups by email and by phone. Over the course of implementation, the approach was refined to personalize the experience even more. For example, promotional items were offered to donors and recognition messages from recipients were sent to them to mark major milestones in their first experiences donating.

Expanded to blood drives in spring 2022, the program has borne fruit, as seen in the rate of return of first-time donors (all labile products combined), which went from 38.7% in 2019-2020 to 50.8% in 2022-2023.

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### Resumption of recognition evenings

Donor recognition evenings resumed in fall 2022 after a three-year hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic. From September to November, nine evenings were organized throughout the province for blood, plasma and platelet donors and one evening was held for stem cell donors. In 2022, these evenings paid tribute to more than 1,400 donors.

To be invited to one of these evenings, a donor must have achieved a new milestone between August 1 and July 31 of the previous year. The number of donations made by donors at all the recognition evenings totalled 290,656 in 2022!

The last recognition evening for volunteers dated back to spring 2019. Ten evenings for volunteers of organizing committees, permanent volunteers of Héma-Québec, and members of the Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) are planned for spring 2023. In all, 2,225 volunteers will be honoured.

## Employees

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### Evolving work methods

In the specific context of the end of COVID-19-related measures, the implementation of an organizational life code for harmoniously living together was successful in helping employees find a new remote work/office balance and collaborating differently and effectively.

Héma-Québec's telework policy entered into effect in June 2022. Through this new policy, the organization is adapting to needs expressed by a category of employees by offering maximum flexibility regarding their physical presence in the office within an adaptive framework.

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### Employee experience project

The objective of the employee experience project is to retain and mobilize employees and increase their well-being by providing them with a work environment that offers rewarding and enriching opportunities. HEC Montréal is a major partner in this project, more specifically in the initial steps of data collection that began in June 2022 with the administration of the first in a series of three surveys on the employees' perceived experience and their desired experience.

Discussion groups were also held in 2022 and 2023, offering new opportunities for employees to express their opinion on this important matter. The results of this first wave of surveys were disseminated at the start of 2023 through an information video capsule and meetings held by managers in each of the vice-presidents' departments.

Héma-Québec is proud to draw inspiration from the voice of its employees to build with them the "employee value proposition" that will make it possible to improve the candidate experience and the employee experience within the organization by the end of the three surveys. Next year, the second wave of surveys will be conducted along with the relevant feedback steps.

Initiatives for greater inclusion of persons from LGBTQ+ communities

In the wake of adopting a gender neutral questionnaire in fall 2022, Héma-Québec prioritized the alignment of its internal inclusion practices with this new approach. In addition to regulatory training, Héma-Québec took the initiative of offering additional professional training to its staff to raise even more awareness of the different realities of the LGBTQ+ community.

Designed in partnership with Fondation Émergence, a non-profit organization specializing in this field, training was given to all employees who have contact with customers, especially blood drive and call centre staff. By showcasing the reality of members in LGBTQ+ communities and the interactions that staff have with this donor group, the sessions provided the added benefit of increasing the employees' knowledge of this sensitive topic. As for the regulatory component, the aim was to support the changes brought about to the newly modified work procedures.

### Digital technology

Introduction of a new integrated management software package: a major digital transformation milestone at Héma-Québec

The transition to a new integrated management software package (PGI) occupies a major place in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. This five-year program, a veritable cornerstone of the technological foundation of the organization, will make it possible to improve processes by relying on adapted digital technology. Once completed, Héma-Québec's employees will benefit from modern, effective and safe technological solutions.

Among the key steps completed during the last fiscal year are:

- the choice of an integrator partner;
- the official launch of the project in September 2022;
- the preparation consisting of understanding and analyzing the organization's operational modes, confirming the scope of the program and revising the roadmap;
- the exploration, which spanned December 2022 to March 2023, consisting of defining the solution by drawing inspiration from the industry's best practices, confirming the processes and constructing "user scenarios".

These steps pave the way for completing the next ones, including Phase 1 that deals with stable products, the supply chain, finance,



and the management of training, which is planned for 2024. The integration of new modules and a management system in the software package will make it possible to better follow up the training and serve as evidence of compliance for regulatory agencies.

Horizon Project: continuation of the automation of the qualification laboratory

The aim of the Horizon Project is to replace glass tubes with plastic tubes and to introduce a pre-analytical chain in the qualification laboratory. Glass tubes are nearing the end of their life and plastic tubes have become the industry standard. This change will facilitate ongoing operations since the new tubes are easily transferable. For its part, the pre-analytical chain is an automated solution that

opens and automatically sorts the tubes, thereby dispensing with unnecessary actions and avoiding injuries to staff.

This project, which will be implemented in 2023, is forecast to improve ergonomics and achieve significant gains in productivity. A second phase, which will enable the auto-registration of the tubes, will be launched and should be completed in 2024.

# SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The Medical Affairs and Innovation and Transfusion Medicine department teams have continued to conduct research and development activities, while supporting and playing an advisory role to Héma-Québec's operations. These teams have contributed to positioning Héma-Québec as a role model of innovation internationally.

The teams continued carrying out their current innovation, development and support activities for the organization's line of products and services. These include many projects involving labile blood products, stem cells, mother's milk and human tissues.

## PlasCov Biobank

Héma-Québec is pursuing the major development initiative and implementation of PlasCov, a biobank of plasma samples that will help better understand the evolution of the immune response to SARS-CoV-2, in particular in a post-vaccination context. The samples stored in this biobank form a precious reference base. They will also be a source of data that will be of use to the scientific community in conducting future studies for the benefit of all Quebecers.

## COVID-19 seroprevalence study

Héma-Québec's research management continued to put their expertise and facilities at the service of public health. Among the COVID-19-related research projects was the seroprevalence study of antibodies directed at SARS-CoV-2, which helped draw a more precise picture of the evolution of the epidemiological situation to support the public authorities' decision-making on how to manage the pandemic.

## Innovative test to evaluate the regenerative potential of stem cells

Héma-Québec's teams developed a new test that ensures the quality of the stem cells used for transplantation. The test currently used throughout the world is called the colony proliferation assay, which consists of measuring the ability of cells to reproduce in a context similar to the human body in the laboratory. Results are generally available after 14 days.

The new test developed by Héma-Québec rests on the same bases but, instead of waiting for new cells to appear, researchers look for a change in the STAT5 protein, indicating the start of the cell activation and reproduction process. As a change to the

STAT5 protein appears minutes after stimulation of the sample, the new test developed at Héma-Québec is much quicker than the current test.

Testing has already proven the correlation between the new test and the current one. There still remains verifying the correlation with the engraftment. This will be done in the coming months and years. That said, the presentation of the test at conferences and international expert meetings has already generated a great deal of interest, which has led to the launch of a multicentre study aimed at the trial and standardization of the method in cell therapy laboratories in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia.



Research for the Health of  
the Population of Québec

2021-2022 Scientific Activities Report



HÉMA-QUÉBEC

**In its third year of publication, Héma-Québec's scientific activity report presents all the studies and projects conducted from April 1, 2021, to December 31, 2022. To learn more about the organization's achievements, consult the [report here](#).**

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN COLLABORATING

Strategic partners within the  
health system



**Samuel,**  
blood donor

## PARTNERSHIPS IN RESEARCH

It may be too early to state categorically that the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, but it is undeniable that a number of Héma-Québec's activities have resumed at a pace comparable to that of the years preceding this crisis. This general recovery is a testimony to the sustainability and robustness of Héma-Québec's many strategic partnerships with the health community and scientific research. While maintaining Héma-Québec at the forefront of the progress achieved in its field of activity, these successful collaborations highlight the knowledge and expertise of its teams.

### Seroprevalence studies

At the request of the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Héma-Québec continued to collaborate with the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ), in partnership with the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force (CITF), to conduct large-scale studies among its donors. As in the first waves of the pandemic, these studies were primarily aimed at estimating the proportion of the Québec population that had contracted the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19.

Since blood drives are held across Québec, blood donors form a group that is representative of the general population. Héma-Québec is in an ideal position to carry out such studies because it already systematically collects samples from each blood donation and has the laboratories and expertise to test them. A first study of this type, called a seroprevalence study, was conducted after the first wave in spring 2020, followed by a second phase conducted at the start of 2021, a third phase in summer 2021, and a fourth phase conducted in several stages in 2022, after the start of the Omicron wave that broke out at the end of 2021.

Phase 3 of the seroprevalence studies marked a change in the approach taken. For the first time, plasma samples from the new PlasCov biobank were studied in tandem with blood samples. The plasma samples have the advantage of coming from donors who make regular donations. It was therefore possible to compare the data over different periods to obtain a clearer picture of the evolution of the contamination within the population, especially for the pre- and post-vaccination periods.

### Results of the fourth phase

From the start of 2022 to November, Phase 4 was entirely conducted with plasma samples from the PlasCov biobank. This made it possible to identify antibodies present solely in persons recently infected with SARS-CoV-2 by comparing the level of antibodies in two samples at different times for the same individual. This ratio-based approach revealed a seroprevalence of 85.7% from December 2021 to November 2022, i.e., during the Omicron wave.

### PlasCov biobank

Before the vaccination program in Québec was rolled out in March 2021, Héma-Québec began a true race against the clock to ensure that it had reference samples to be able to make post-vaccination comparisons. Since plasma donors make donations at a much more regular frequency than blood donors, their samples represent an extremely valuable source of data for researchers. Accordingly, the decision was made to create the new PlasCov biobank to collect and preserve, with donor consent, these plasma samples as material for future studies.

This project, set up in a matter of months, was very successful with donors, enabling PlasCov to gather 192,355 samples at March 31, 2023. In the coming years, the PlasCov biobank will be an indispensable tool to track the evolution of the effects of vaccination on the pandemic and conduct subsequent research on related topics.

### Epidemiological studies prior to adoption of the gender-neutral questionnaire

Epidemiological studies conducted in collaboration with Canadian Blood Services made it possible to expand the eligibility to donate blood without affecting the safety of recipients. Thanks to an individual risk assessment of practices and behaviours (without referring to the donor's sex, gender or sexual orientation), men who had sex with men less than three months before their donation can now donate plasma destined for fractionation (since October 2, 2022) as well as blood and platelets (since December 4, 2022).

### Other partnerships

During the past year, Héma-Québec's scientific teams have joined their expertise to that of external collaborators, leading to the publication of nearly 20 scientific articles.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR BLOOD AND PLASMA DONATIONS

Across Québec, businesses and associations help Héma-Québec to improve the daily lives of patients by creating a partnership with us. These collaborations greatly help raise people's awareness of blood and plasma donation. They form an essential pillar upon which Héma-Québec depends to fulfill its primary mission, year after year.

**In 2022-2023, 1,699 blood drives were organized through the collaboration of organizing committees in private and public organizations, schools and community groups.**

Many private and public organizations encourage their staff to take part in blood drives, either external or held within their facilities. Community or social groups, for their part, can integrate blood drives into their regular activities or appeal to their volunteers to organize drives. Police and fire services are also valued partners in encouraging the gift of life.

Moreover, many organizations mobilize their teams as part of promotional and recruitment activities aimed at encouraging people to donate at one of Héma-Québec's donor centres.

### Targeted mobilization for plasma donation

Student groups at colleges and universities, as well as regional businesses, are important partners of plasma donation, a type of donation that is done solely in Héma-Québec's 11 donor centres. At the school level, this can consist of organizing friendly competitions between faculties or mobilizing sports teams. In 2022-2023, many organizations were approached and responded positively to the call. Their support is vital in helping increase plasma self-sufficiency in Québec, a priority goal of Héma-Québec's strategy, and raising awareness of this type of donation.

Results obtained in centres that are actively involved in partnerships speak for themselves. During the fiscal year, 956 persons donated plasma for the first time in all four PLASMAVIE centres. The recruitment of 18.7% of these donors is attributable to partnerships.

### Partnership with the UQAM Department of Sexology and the Fondation Émergence

Héma-Québec is concerned about better understanding and improving the experience it offers to LGBTQ+ communities. With this in mind, it adopted a more inclusive qualification approach in 2022. Héma-Québec was supported in its endeavours by the UQAM Department of Sexology and by the Fondation Émergence, which helped it identify avenues for improvement and take progressive steps toward this goal.

The support of UQAM was especially significant in Héma-Québec's transition toward gender-neutral questionnaires (GNQ), leading to the review of much of the content intended for persons of sexual or gender diversity and developed as part of this change.

The Department of Sexology also contributed to the collaboration with the Fondation Émergence, a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate, inform and raise awareness among the population to the realities of persons who recognize themselves within the sexual diversity and plurality of gender identities and expressions.

The foundation was mandated to develop the awareness component of the GNQ training that Héma-Québec's employees followed. Members of the foundation also organized and facilitated a group discussion on the topic with Héma-Québec's employees; their external publication resources (glossaries, terminology) were also used by Héma-Québec.

The expert advice of the two partners helped better equip staff to feel at ease in answering questions about the eligibility of persons from sexual diversity or their partners, and to know the clarifications to bring.

### Launch of the rare blood program in our hospitals

Identifying rare blood that is compatible to that of a patient can easily look like a real treasure hunt — finding a blood donor can even become a global race against the clock. The challenge is enormous when you consider that less than one donor in 1,000 will be compatible with someone with rare blood. This is why Héma-Québec is striving to diversify and increase its rare blood bank, which has approximately 2,000 frozen red blood cells of many rare types.

One of the obstacles to expanding the bank is the fact that Héma-Québec does not have the right to directly contact patients with rare blood to ask them to donate blood or take part in a family study with their siblings. Faced with this situation, the objective of the rare blood program, a pilot project launched in January 2022 in partnership with nine hospitals, is to obtain these patients' consent for Héma-Québec to contact them in collaboration with the nursing staff.

In 2022-2023, we identified 19 patients with rare blood and received 10 consents, resulting in one blood donation to the bank — very encouraging results, considering the rarity of the cases! Added to this are the recruitment efforts undertaken through family studies, which enabled Héma-Québec to reach out to eight siblings and obtain six consents. These siblings are currently being tested to determine if they also have rare blood. The province-wide launch of the program, i.e., establishing a partnership with all the province's hospitals, is planned for spring 2023.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR HUMAN TISSUES

### Sole distributor mandate for human tissues

Twenty years after initiating its tissue collection and preparation activities, Héma-Québec was entrusted with exclusive management of the supply of human tissues for the entire healthcare network by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. To date, our organization has supplied the majority of these products, the remainder being purchased from international suppliers. To assume these new responsibilities that are essential to its mission, Héma-Québec will implement a centralized purchasing system. As part of its mandate, a centralized product tracing register and follow-up of adverse reactions will be implemented, in line with a recommendation formulated by the Biovigilance Committee. A transition period is in effect to enable hospitals to align their procurement process with this system, which will enter into force in fall 2024.

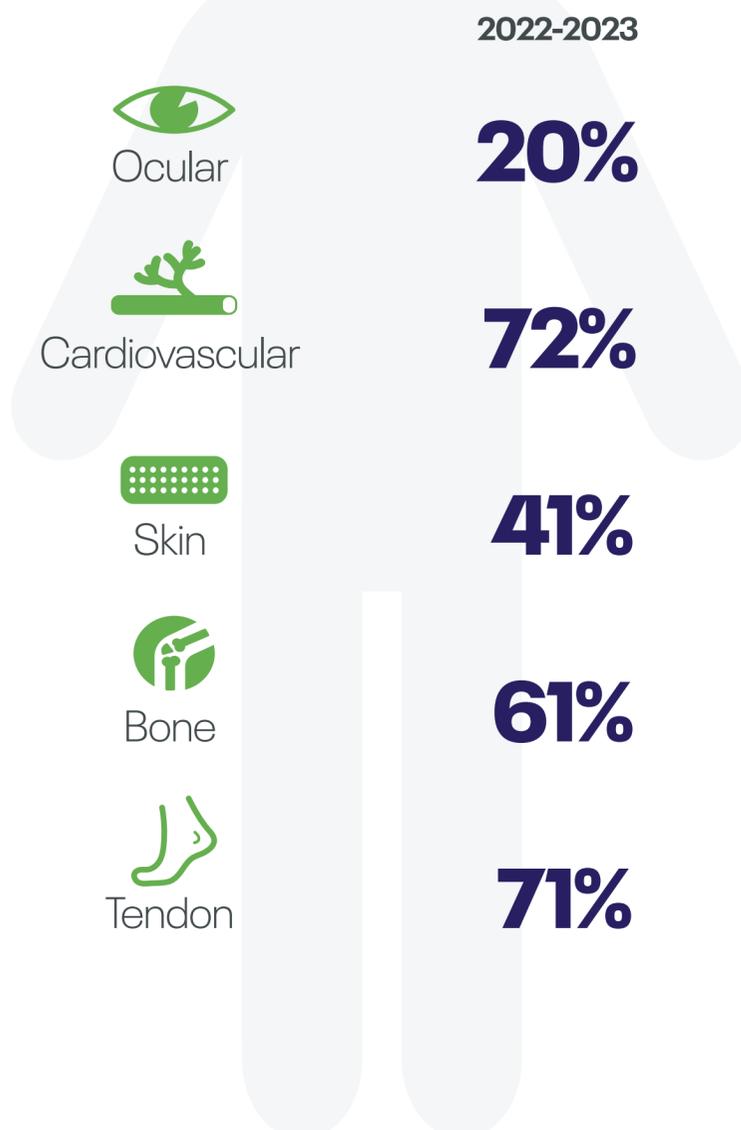
Since being granted the sole distributor mandate for the delivery of these new services, Héma-Québec has been active in drawing a clear picture of the consumption within the network of human tissues provided to Héma-Québec by external suppliers. Expert advisory groups (surgeon users) will provide the medical expertise required to guide the choice of products and ensure a secure supply that covers all needs.

### Regional partnerships for the supply of human tissues

Through a collaborative agreement with the Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de Chaudière-Appalaches, a recruitment and tissue collection coordinator began work in fall 2022 at the Centre to identify potential tissue donors in the region. Like the model deployed in the Saguenay in 2021, this new officer will act closely with health professionals to seamlessly coordinate all the steps in the referral process and, ultimately, the donation. This individual will be responsible for identifying potential cases in the region, qualifying the donor and ensuring the collection of ocular tissues. This role is vital since it saves precious time in reducing collection delays and ensuring that better quality tissues are collected.

To obtain an optimal number of human tissue donor referrals, Héma-Québec is pursuing collaborative agreements with several other strategic partners in the healthcare network. In addition to the partnerships listed below, the organization has reached agreements with the CHU de Québec-Université Laval, the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de l'Estrie-Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke, and the CISSS of Montérégie-Centre and of Outaouais.

## PROPORTION OF DONORS FROM DEATHS FLAGGED AT THE BUREAU DU CORONER



### Partnership with the Bureau du coroner

The presence of Héma-Québec liaison officers in the Bureau du coroner day and night makes it possible to quickly connect with the families of recently deceased individuals during events requiring the intervention of a coroner. This close collaboration has significantly reduced the time needed to obtain permission to collect human tissues, maximizing their potential for transplantation.

There was a slight increase in the number of files consulted in the coroner's case management system (GECCO) compared with last year. The number of tissue donors went from 223 (2021-2022) to 196 (2022-2023). This reduction is essentially the result of fewer ocular tissue donors: there were 97 donors in 2021-2022, compared with 75 in 2022-2023. In addition, 72% of heart tissues collected (77 of 107) in the past year came from this partnership. The number of cardiovascular tissue donors increased by 13 in 2022-2023, compared with 2021-2022.

### Partnership with the Clinical Coordination Unit for Pre-hospital Emergency Services

During 2022-2023, the nursing staff of the Clinical Coordination Unit for Pre-hospital Emergency (UCCSPU) referred 1,046 donors to Héma-Québec. This represents a 5% increase compared with the previous year. These results are largely attributable to the systematization of the referral process.

Based on the collaboration established with the UCCSPU, a nurse may now communicate with the grieving family and offer the option of tissue donation in the absence of a decision in the consent registers to organ and tissue donation. The positive impacts of this major step for the supply of human tissues are beginning to be noticed.



### Partnership with the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM)

After a decrease in the number of referrals because of the pandemic, the partnership established with the CHUM regained momentum. In 2022-2023, the partnership led to 311 referrals, which represents an increase of 16% compared with the previous year.

### Working group for better management of heart tissue

To increase the recruitment of heart tissue donors, a committee was formed in December 2021, made up of representatives from Héma-Québec, the Association des pathologistes du Québec, the Bureau du coroner, pathologists from the Institut universitaire de cardiologie et de pneumologie de Québec-Université Laval (IUCPQ), CHUM and the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), as well as the Laboratoire des sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale. This group identified solutions to facilitate the collection of pulmonary valves, while enabling the pathologist and coroner to properly identify the cause of death using residual heart tissue. Substantive work has been done in terms of increasing the number of viable tissues that could be freed up for patients awaiting a transplant, with promising results. From June 2022 to March 2023, 16 additional hearts were obtained through the process review conducted by this partnership.

### Testing services for Transplant Québec

Héma-Québec's specialized laboratories support Transplant Québec by performing qualification tests to determine if a candidate for organ donation is a carrier of blood-borne infections. These tests must be done quickly before organs are collected for transplantation. The tests are performed using specialized equipment and reagents that are not found in hospitals. In 2022-2023, Héma-Québec tested 158 samples for Transplant Québec.

## STEM CELL PARTNERSHIPS

### Renewed partnerships with six hospitals for cord blood donation

Last year, two of nine hospitals resumed their participation in the cord blood collection program after a pause caused by the pandemic: the Centre hospitalier universitaire (CHU) Sainte-Justine and the Hôpital de la Cité-de-la-Santé du Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de Laval. At the end of a period of reflection and evaluation aimed at optimizing the program, Héma-Québec chose to scale down the number of collection centres and to encourage the development of their expertise, an approach recommended by many cord blood banks around the world.

After evaluating the collection centres, the decision was made to renew agreements with four of them, bringing the total number of collection centres to six. In addition to the two active centres, the program will also include the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), St. Mary's Hospital, LaSalle General Hospital, and the Jewish General Hospital. Two of these centres have already begun their collection activities, and the other two will be starting around June 2023, once staff training is up to date.

The decision to limit the number of cord blood collection centres will allow for better use of the resources available to Héma-Québec and in the hospital centres, thereby increasing the quantity, quality and ethnic diversity of the banked cord blood units.

### Partnership with Swab The World

The Swab The World Foundation (STW) is a non-profit Montréal-based organization whose mission is to boost ethnic diversity in the worldwide stem cell donor base to increase the probability of finding a compatible donor for everyone. The foundation guides patients throughout the entire world, who are searching for a compatible donor, in conducting a successful recruitment campaign. With a strong presence online and on school campuses, STW provides Héma-Québec with additional outreach to its target audiences.

The agreement signed in July 2022, linking Héma-Québec and the Swab The World Foundation, enables the two organizations to combine their recruitment efforts to increase the number of enrolments in the Stem Cell Donor Registry and to diversify it. Through this partnership, Héma-Québec allows the STW to set up donor recruitment booths near university blood drives and provides the STW with buccal swab kits that are the first step to enrolment in the Registry.

Both organizations are joining forces to increase the number of enrolments in the Stem Cell Donor Registry to provide more patients awaiting a transplant with the treatment that could save their life.

### FACT accreditation

Close collaboration has existed for many years between Héma-Québec and the CHUM (Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal), a client of Héma-Québec's peripheral autologous stem cell cryopreservation service. In the past year, the two institutions reached milestones (organization of statutory meetings to establish guidelines for the project, implementation of a new optimized project validated in the laboratory, contract renewal) aimed at obtaining their accreditation by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT), planned for 2024.

The FACT accreditation will certify the quality standards of the entire transplant process, from the apheresis donation, manufacturing and cryopreservation of the products to their administration to patients. This shared certification will foster the development of an even greater partnership between the two institutions. The improvements made will also benefit the three other autologous stem cell transplant centres that use Héma-Québec's stem cell laboratory, i.e., the Jewish General Hospital, the CHUS Fleurimont and the Hôpital Sacré-Cœur.

## MANAGEMENT MANDATE OF THE SYSTÈME D'INFORMATION INTÉGRÉ SUR LES ACTIVITÉS TRANSFUSIONNELLES ET D'HÉMOVIGILANCE

Since May 2018, the Office of the Vice-President, Information Technology and Digital Strategy, has been responsible for the operational management of the Système d'information intégré sur les activités transfusionnelles et d'hémovigilance (SIATH) for the entire healthcare network. This software solution is key to managing inventories of blood products, from their receipt by hospitals to their transfusion. It ensures traceability of all the transfusion activities of Québec's blood banks.

As part of its mandate with the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Héma-Québec continued updating and migrating the SIATH toward a new private cloud-based platform. This migration has been completed in 91 of the 93 hospitals operating blood banks in the Québec network. The project will be completed in 2023, a little later than planned because of issues with the computer equipment in some remote regions. A new phase of the evolution of the system will follow.

Since July 2021, Héma-Québec has also been responsible for technical and application support to the Sommaire transfusionnel (ST) platform, a Web-based application used by hospital blood banks to provide the transfusion history of users and facilitate the exchange of information between institutions across the province. At the request of the Ministère, the ST movement to a cloud-based infrastructure was done in 2022.

## ASSOCIATION DES BÉNÉVOLES DU DON DE SANG

With its 13 regional chapters, the Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) is present throughout Québec. Its mission is to support the recruitment of new donors in partnership with Héma-Québec. It also plays a vital role in Héma-Québec's mission to ensure a stable and sufficient supply of blood products to the Québec population. The easing of safety measures and the return of activities at some locations, such as college and university campuses, has enabled the ABDS to significantly intensify its recruitment activities. More than 700 booths were set up during blood drives, resulting in more than 23,000 appointments booked by donors. In the past year, the ABDS has dedicated its efforts specifically to helping Héma-Québec achieve its objective of plasma self-sufficiency.

Launched in the middle of the pandemic, the ABDS's youth wing continued to grow in 2022-2023. The number of young ambassadors between the ages of 18 and 30 continued to increase, reaching 150 on March 31, 2023. The aim of this strategic and foundational project is to prepare the next generation and raise awareness among young people about the various types of donations. The ambassadors received training and completed several projects to recruit blood, plasma, platelet and stem cell donors.

Some of these ambassadors created student donor associations, including the comité Sang-Cible at the Université de Montréal and the McGill Students' Blood Donors Association (MSBDA) at McGill University, groups with a sustainable presence that organize blood drives or promote other sectors of activity. The ABDS provides them with visual content and information that the associations disseminate on their social media accounts.

## HÉMA-QUÉBEC FOUNDATION

The Héma-Québec Foundation organizes fundraising events and provides financial support to Héma-Québec's innovative and strategic projects in its various sectors of activity, including blood products, stable products, stem cells, human tissues and mother's milk. Its main area of intervention is supporting the Association des bénévoles du don de sang in its mission to recruit new donors and to raise public awareness of the importance of blood donation.

In 2022-2023, the Foundation concentrated its efforts on supporting the recruitment of new plasma donors. During the past year, it conducted a fundraising campaign that collected more than \$482 289, with particular emphasis on plasma donation and mother's milk donation.



The Foundation's best-known fundraising activity is undeniably the Gala annuel de la Magie de la Vie. Now in its third year, the Gala was held in November 2022 and was once again an unqualified success, raising \$162,000 for the cause. Invited guests received moving testimonials of recipients whose lives were transformed by various types of donations.

# OUR INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

**As part of its mission, Héma-Québec is mandated to develop and maintain partnerships that encourage the sharing of information and the advancement of related knowledge and techniques. The importance of these partnerships is enshrined in the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*, which states that the organization must “maintain links to ensure collaboration and the exchange of information with counterpart organizations in Canada and elsewhere, in order to be informed of and share expertise.”**

**Héma-Québec wishes to recognize the many partners with whom it has had the opportunity to collaborate during 2022-2023.**

- AABB
- Alpha-1 Canada
- America’s Blood Centers
- American Association of Tissue Banks
- American Red Cross
- American Society for Apheresis
- American Society of Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics
- Americas’ SAP Users’ Group
- AOH Québec
- Association d’anémie falciforme du Québec
- Association de thérapie génique du Québec
- Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS)
- Association des médecins hématologues et oncologues du Québec
- Association des patients immunodéficients du Québec (APIQ)
- Association for Blood Donor Professionals (ADRP)
- Association professionnelle des Chargés de sécurité transfusionnelle (CST) du Québec (APCSTQ)
- Banque d’yeux du Centre universitaire en ophtalmologie
- Banque d’yeux du Québec
- Biomedical Excellence for Safer Transfusion
- Bureau du coroner
- Canadian Association for Porphyria
- Canadian Blood Services
- Canadian Hemophilia Society
- Canadian Hemophilia Society – Québec Chapter
- Canadian Hereditary Angioedema Network (CHAEN)
- Canadian Organ and Tissue Donors Association
- Canadian Society for Transfusion Medicine
- Canadian Standards Association
- Cell Therapy Transplant Canada (CTTC)
- Centre de recherche évaluative en santé (CRES)
- Centre de traitement des inhibiteurs
- Centre hospitalier de l’Université de Montréal (CHUM)
- Chambre des notaires du Québec
- CIUSSS du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean
- COCQ-SIDA
- Comité consultatif national de médecine transfusionnelle
- Commission de la santé et des services sociaux des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador (CSSSPNQL)
- Consortium for Blood Group Genes
- Cord Blood Association
- Corporation des thanatologues du Québec
- Douglas – Bell Canada Brain Bank
- Établissement français du sang
- Fondation Émergence
- Fondation Héma-Québec
- Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies
- Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé
- Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT)
- GBS/CIPD Foundation of Canada
- Groupe de travail sur l’immunité face à la COVID-19 (GTIC)
- Institut national d’excellence en santé et en service sociaux (INESSS)
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique
- Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ)
- Institut universitaire de cardiologie et de pneumologie de Québec (IUCPQ)
- International MakSystem User Group (IMUG)
- International Plasma Fractionator Association (IPFA)
- International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT)
- International Society of Hematology
- Laboratoire des sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale
- Leucan
- Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada
- Market Research Bureau (MRB)
- McMaster University
- Ministry of Health of Ontario
- Mitacs
- National Advisory Committee on Blood and Blood Products (NAC)
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
- Network of Rare Blood Disorder Organizations (NRBDO)
- Ordre professionnel des technologistes médicaux du Québec : Formaline
- Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association (PPTA)
- Platelet Immunology Working Party (PIWP)
- Régie de l’assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)
- Regroupement des directeurs des cliniques des traitements de l’hémophilie du Québec
- Réseau de thérapie cellulaire, tissulaire et génique du Québec (ThéCell)
- Safe Blood for Africa Foundation
- The Canadian Donation and Transplantation Research Program
- Transplant Québec
- Unité de coordination clinique des services préhospitaliers d’urgence (UCCSPU) de l’Hôtel-Dieu de Lévis
- Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)
- University of Alberta Hospital
- Urgences-santé
- World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH)
- World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA)



**Yahya,**  
signed up for the  
Stem Cell Donor  
Registry

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN VIGILANCE

Risk management

The safety and quality of distributed products and services provided are paramount. Héma-Québec manages risks in an integrated manner at all levels of the organization based on best practices.

## SUPPLY IN BLOOD PRODUCTS

### Evolution of the demand for blood products

During the past fiscal year, Héma-Québec constantly monitored the growth in demand to be able to properly adapt its offer to the needs. The quantity of packed red blood cells distributed in 2022-2023 remained at less than 5% of the levels of the 2019-2020 pre-pandemic period. This is explained in part by the gradual resumption of hospital activities in spring 2022, which had an impact on blood product consumption. For its part, platelet delivery remained stable compared to the previous year, while the demand for cryosupernatants and plasma used for transfusions increased by 5%. Héma-Québec efficiently met all the hospitals' needs for blood products.

### Many calls to donate: donors respond

The start of fiscal 2022-2023 was marked by an easing of health measures tied to the COVID-19 pandemic, which coincided with the appearance of new Omicron subvariants of the virus. This resulted in a high degree of absenteeism at blood drives, among both employees and donors, and represented a donor recruitment and supply challenge that lasted until fall.

To maintain the supply at an optimal level, the organization called for donations, especially for specific blood groups. With the help of these targeted calls and the work of its teams, Héma-Québec was not only able to rely on its loyal donors during the pandemic but also to begin welcoming new donors again in large numbers. The return in force of the latter, especially through the resumption of blood drives in schools, was excellent news.

### Sickle cell anemia: major efforts to raise awareness

Sickle cell anemia is an inherited blood disorder that primarily affects Black communities. This chronic condition is associated with many complications, including painful episodes that occur repeatedly for some of those affected. One of the treatments to improve quality of life consists of blood exchanges (erythrapheresis) to replace the red blood cells of the person affected with those of healthy donors. This procedure is generally done every four to six weeks and requires the use of red blood cells from 10 different donors.

The challenge is all the greater when one knows that the persons who receive transfusions on a regular basis are at risk of developing antibodies that translate into adverse reactions during transfusion. It has been shown that a donor and a recipient with a similar genetic background is a preferred option to reduce these adverse reactions.

Nearly 9,300 new blood donors have been recruited from Black communities since Héma-Québec launched its sickle cell anemia awareness program in 2009. Despite these encouraging results, however, the number of persons with sickle cell anemia who require blood exchanges is also on the rise and today number 200. Potentially 26,000 blood donations are needed each year to improve the quality of life of these individuals.

The 130 for 1 Campaign — whose name refers to the fact that 130 separate donors are needed on average to treat a person with sickle cell anemia for one year — was an opportunity for the organization to raise awareness in a more far-reaching and ambitious way than in the past.

Released at the end of June, the 130 for 1 video enjoyed international visibility. Seen 1.4 million times, the video is an important tool to make people aware of this issue by illustrating the challenge from the recipient's viewpoint.



[View the campaign video](#)

## SUPPLY IN STABLE PRODUCTS

### Strategies to achieve plasma self-sufficiency

To reach its plasma self-sufficiency target, Héma-Québec is highlighting three major strategies. Given that apheresis plasma donation is done only in a donor centre and not at a blood drive, these strategies rely on:

- Optimizing current centres
- Opening new centres, and
- Strategically testing technologies used for the plasma collection and freezing process

### Optimizing current centres

The optimization of centres involves mainly those in the Greater Montréal area, which have large unused capacities. To benefit fully from their capacities, the Laval, Place Versailles and Kirkland centres are currently the subject of customized improvement projects. Héma-Québec has also launched many initiatives to maximize plasma collections in the PLASMAVIE and GLOBULE centres in the Québec City area.

### Opening new centres

The opening of new centres dedicated to plasma donation will begin in 2024 and be completed toward the end of 2026. Their location has not yet been determined. The choice will be based on the objective of reaching the maximum number of potential donors and improving the plasma donation offer.

#### Opening of the Saint-Bruno Centre

Open since October 31, 2022, Héma-Québec's Saint-Bruno Donor Centre falls within the project to increase plasma self-sufficiency. Its plasma donation results are already very encouraging. From the time of its opening to the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 2023, the centre recorded 2,084 plasma donations, representing an average of close to 100 plasma donations per week.



### Strategically testing technologies

Strategic testing of technologies used to collect and freeze plasma is still under way. The objective is to choose and implement processes and technologies to optimize the quantity of plasma collected for each donation.

### Evolution of the plasma market in Québec and internationally

As the distributor of stable products, Héma-Québec must meet the needs of hospitals, while ensuring the security of the supply and the safety of the products.

### Return to non-allocated distribution of immunoglobulins

Due to the difficulties of global plasma supply, which began at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and following Héma-Québec's recommendation, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux decided to constrain the hospitals' demand for immunoglobulins, representing approximately 70% of the stable products distributed by Héma-Québec. Accordingly, in spring 2020, hospitals rationed their immunoglobulin orders by 10% and by 20% in the fall.

As a result of the evolution of the pandemic and of a more stable supply of intravenous polyvalent immunoglobulins (IGIV), the Ministère lifted the allocation in January 2023, following a new recommendation

by Héma-Québec. There are no longer any restrictions imposed on hospitals regarding the supply of immunoglobulins.

### Distributing new innovative drugs

Always in the spirit of efficiently meeting the needs of Quebecers, Héma-Québec began distributing two new monoclonal antibody drugs. The first is used as a treatment for acute Hemophilia A, and the second is used as a prophylaxis for the treatment of hereditary angioedema.

Access to innovative, safe and effective drugs is a major step forward for patients. They improve care and offer patients a better quality of life.

The integration of these two new drugs —which is not completed in the case of the first drug — unfolded smoothly. The response from the medical community has been positive, and there is great interest in both these products.

## SYSTÈME DE GESTION INTÉGRÉE DES RISQUES

Héma-Québec's integrated risk management system (Système de gestion intégrée des risques - SGIR) was set up during previous fiscal years and is aimed at identifying, assessing and defining strategic operational risks to enable the organization to react quickly and effectively should such risks occur. In 2022-2023, the SGIR proved its relevance by contributing successfully to the organization's rapid adaptation to the various issues encountered: labour shortage, cybersecurity threats, changes in inventory, and adaptation of buildings. The inventory changes are explained, in particular, by the very volatile context that persists in the wake of COVID-19. Héma-Québec aims for excellence in organizational resilience and, to achieve this, has adopted a resilience policy and guideline.

# QUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL AFFAIRS

## Realigning quality requirements

The project to adopt better quality practices, in particular by shifting to a compliance culture, began in 2021 and was completed at the end of the last fiscal year, March 31, 2023. The objectives of this realignment were to raise awareness among all staff about best practices affecting quality, upgrade processes and tools in terms of best practices, and equip Héma-Québec with a proactive governance regarding events dealing with quality.

Four major milestones were reached:

- Job descriptions were changed by adding responsibilities for quality;
- Training was improved at welcoming and continuous improvement stages;
- The overhaul of controlled quality process documents (described below) was launched;
- Tools were designed to support the achievement of objectives.

At the end of the project, all the employees received general training on quality, and those whose tasks were part of the donor-recipient axis also received strategic training. Through this realignment, Héma-Québec continues to focus on the highest performance standards to ensure the security and safety of its products.

## Overhauling controlled documents

The ongoing project to overhaul Héma-Québec's documents involves more than 4,000 controlled regulatory or administrative documents. Based on continuous improvement principles, its main objectives are to standardize the documents and, more specifically, to:

- Build a consistent document structure with the chronology of trans-sectional processes previously mapped out by the process office;

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in the process;
- Clarify the execution of tasks to be performed in a standard and accurate manner, based on a logical sequence of operations;
- Bring together all the controlled administrative documents in the same computer tool, with the controlled regulatory documents.

The objective is to reduce the possibility of error and of non-compliance, improve understanding of the work steps and become more efficient in accomplishing our mission.

Once completed, all Héma-Québec's documents will be centralized and managed in the same computer tool. The project is built in stages associated with sectors of activity that are chosen based on a risk assessment. As the overhaul project progresses, the documents of each sector are integrated into the new document structure. At March 31, 2023, 10% of the steps in the document overhaul had been completed, representing more than 400 documents revised or drafted.

## Changes to qualification criteria

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Removal of the MSM criterion and the criterion for trans and non-binary persons

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In the wake of adopting a single gender-neutral questionnaire, initially for plasma donations in October 2022 and for other blood donations in December 2022, the criterion related to men who have sex with men (MSM) was removed.

Because of evidence-based data currently available, the transition from a population-based approach, i.e., one that targets a group of individuals in particular, to a personalized approach was now possible. Exclusions are based on behaviours that are proven to present a higher risk of contracting a blood-borne sexual infection. The objective is to maintain the same high degree of blood product safety while adopting a more inclusive approach. All donors are now asked the same questions, regardless of sex, gender or sexual orientation.

In the same spirit, the criterion related to trans and non-binary persons, which was previously the subject of an internal request for medical information from Héma-Québec's doctors, was also removed.

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Criteria regarding COVID-19

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Following easing of the health measures imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the criterion related to travel outside Canada in the 14 days prior to donating were removed in May 2022.

In October of the same year, the criterion regarding contact with a case (or suspected case) of COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to donating was also removed, and the 14-day exclusion period after the end of signs and symptoms in the case of infection was reduced to 10 days after the start of signs and symptoms.

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Criteria regarding monkeypox

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Faced with an increase in monkeypox cases, a criterion was added in June 2022 to detect donors who had come into contact with confirmed cases of the disease. Donors are now asked: "In the past six weeks, have you been in contact with a person infected with monkeypox?" If the answer is "yes," they are excluded from donating for 41 days after the last contact. A criterion was also added for donors who had had the infection (exclusion for 42 days following the disappearance of signs and symptoms), but no question was added since the questionnaire submitted to donors already includes questions about their health status that detect the presence of such signs and symptoms. On February 24, 2023, Héma-Québec submitted a request to Health Canada to remove the question about contact while maintaining "infection" and "contact" criteria.

### Inspections and audits

Periodic inspections and audits of Héma-Québec’s operational processes by regulatory agencies attest to the degree of quality control the organization exercises over its operations. The conclusions of the most recently conducted inspections attesting to the maintenance of Héma-Québec’s compliance status are still in effect.

#### INSPECTIONS AND AUDITS

Activity sector	Agency	Scope	Date	Conclusion
Blood products	Health Canada	Québec City facility	June 2021	Establishment licences and/or registration renewed in accordance with the <i>Blood Regulations</i>
		PLASMAVIE in Saguenay	January 2022	
		GLOBULE in Kirkland	January 2022	
		PLASMAVIE in Trois-Rivières	January 2022	
Reference laboratory	Bureau de normalisation du Québec	Immunology laboratory: patient analyses	May 2021	Certification renewed in compliance with ISO 15189 standard, molecular biology laboratories
Stem cells	Health Canada	Public Cord Blood Bank	October 2021	Registration renewed in compliance with the <i>Safety of Human Cells, Tissues and Organs for Transplantation Regulations</i>
Information technology and digital strategy	Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux	Information security	August 2021	Declaration of compliance: annual self-evaluation of information security – Report on the specific rule governing organizational security
Numerous services	Transport Canada	Transportation (packaging) of infectious substance samples	September 2021	Activities in compliance with the <i>Transportation of Dangerous Substances Regulation</i>

### Hemovigilance of donors

Héma-Québec documents all reactions following a blood donation, regardless of their degree of severity. Adverse reactions occur rarely and, for the most part, are benign. Analyzing the data obtained makes it possible to adopt preventive measures to minimize reactions that may arise and foster a positive blood donation experience.

In 2022-2023, adverse reactions remained limited. However, we have seen an increase in these observed reactions since 2021-2022, following the end of the declaration of certain mild reactions in the first six months of 2021-2022. All adverse reactions were declared in 2022-2023, which explains the increase. Adverse reactions were reported in 4.9% of the 339,797 donations made, and 94.9% of these were benign.

### OVERVIEW OF ADVERSE REACTIONS

Change in reactions of **1.1%** compared with the previous year

Reactions observed in **4.9%** of donations

**94.9%** of reactions were benign

### RATE AND TYPE OF COMPLICATION POSSIBLE PER 100 DONATIONS

**3.3** vasovagal reactions, 3.1 of which were mild

**0.003** moderate or severe citrate reaction\*

**0.6** arm reaction (e.g., hematoma, bruising, allergy)

\* This reaction may occur solely during an apheresis donation.

### Donations confirmed positive by communicable disease marker

Héma-Québec tests all donations that it collects to detect blood-borne diseases. If a positive result is obtained, the donation is destroyed, and the donor is notified. The number of infections found in donors did not change significantly this year and is in line with the trend observed in recent years.

HIV	0
HCV	10
HBV	14
HTLV	3
Syphilis	20

<b>Total donations tested (HIV, HCV, HBV)</b>	<b>333,079</b>
<b>Total donations tested (Syphilis and HTLV)</b>	<b>228,193</b>

### Prevalence of HIV and HCV in donors compared with the population

The prevalence of HIV and HCV in blood donors remains largely below that observed in the population. These results show that the use of the blood donation qualification questionnaire is an effective safety measure.

PREVALENCE OF HIV AND HCV IN DONORS COMPARED WITH THE POPULATION

	Population	Héma-Québec
HIV	0.2% (1/500)	0.0000% (0/333,170)
HCV	0.54% (1/185)	0.003% (1/33,371)

## MANAGING TALENT AND SUCCESSION

Planning, acquiring, developing and mobilizing talent is a major concern in the current context of a qualified labour shortage. In response to this situation, Héma-Québec now has many talent retention programs aimed at its employees. Skills development, varied professional opportunities, succession for critical and key posts, and recognition are all examples of the efforts deployed over the past fiscal year to meet this major challenge outlined below.

### Skills development

To stimulate employees' learning and mastery of leadership skills and regulatory and professional skills, Héma-Québec:

- Created a standardized professional skills development program;
- Identified four different management levels aimed at leadership development, focused on the specific needs of each level;
- Optimized the regulatory training program by improving planning and adjusting resource allocation to needs.

### Succession development

To encourage internal growth, Héma-Québec conducted an initial cross-sectional review of talent in critical and key posts in each of the vice-presidents' offices. Tools were designed for the development of succession candidates, and coaching was provided to the managers responsible for supporting the individuals targeted for succession in critical and key positions.

### Welcome and integration

The welcome and integration program for new employees was also revised. The objective of this overhaul was to encourage smoother job entry for recruits and to enable managers to contribute to this major responsibility of welcoming every new employee by providing personalized support.

In addition, an integrated solution of satisfaction surveys was recommended to assess the experience of new employees (recruits), as well as the reasons of those who chose to leave the organization. The goal is to establish good diagnostics and to implement action plans needed to reduce the turnover rate.

### Diversity and inclusion

To provide a welcoming and inclusive environment and to encourage a diversity of profiles company-wide, Héma-Québec is currently developing a new integrated diversity and inclusion program. The 2022-2023 initiatives include holding group discussions on the reality of LGBTQ+ communities, new training on the prevention of harassment and the handling of complaints, and additional training on civility at work for employees.



**Éliane,**  
cord blood  
recipient

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND WITH A CLEAR PLAN

Results relative to the  
2021-2025 Strategic Plan

# 1 FOUNDATIONS

## PRIORITIES

### 1.1 | Quality and compliance — Adopt improved quality practices, including a compliance culture shift

A major initiative, the realignment of quality requirements, is under way. This initiative consists of reviewing our foundations for training, job descriptions and processes to ensure the enhancement of the quality culture. It also includes the addition of a qualified workforce to comply with the cycle times of events affecting quality (non-compliances and corrective and preventative actions). Other initiatives, such as remediation projects (quality and validation agreement) and the overhaul of the controlled document systems, are also under way.

### 1.2 | Technology — Acquire adapted, effective and safe technological solutions for our processes in line with our mission and support services, including the integrated management software package (PGI)

Many major technological projects are under way, including our eProgesa mission system and mobile blood drive technology equipment upgrades. The upgrading of our integrated management software package (PGI/ERP) has taken off with a well-structured program. After reviewing the deployment roadmap, Phase 1 is now being completed. More than 100 resources from Héma-Québec, the SAP manufacturer and our integrator Deloitte are working to deliver the applications intended for the first target range of products, i.e., stable products.

### 1.3 | Management — Improve our management methods and information

The latest adjustments to the governance structure, part of which is the Strategic Initiatives Portfolio Management Office, have been made. Portfolio management, based on organizational capacity, is now in place. Dashboards are also being developed to make information related to the programs and projects in Héma-Québec’s portfolio available.

## Solidify our foundations (quality, processes, technology, governance, risk assessment and audits)

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Compliance with prescribed quality event timelines	Under control	80%	100%
Deployment of the new PGI	Under control	15%	80%
Deployment of a dashboard to evaluate the performance of the various activity sectors	Under control	40%	100%
Deployment of the office of strategic initiatives	Under control	100%	100% (end of 2022)

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 1 FOUNDATIONS (CONT'D)

**Solidify our foundations (quality, processes, technology, governance, risk assessment and audits)**

## PRIORITIES

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

### 1.4 | Supply — Optimize key supply processes

During 2022-2023, Héma-Québec adopted a new Procurement Policy as required by Bill 12, along with a series of measures aimed at promoting responsible “buy in Québec” purchasing. Subsequently, Héma-Québec used the occasion to standardize its purchasing practices through a review of its procedures and the overhaul of the sector’s documents and procedures.

### 1.5 | Governance — Optimize governance

A review of Héma-Québec’s governance was initiated. The first stage, which dealt with the evaluation of the operations of the Board of Directors (BoD) and its committees, has been completed, based on best practices. Some recommendations have already been retained and applied or are in progress. The second stage of the governance review, which will deal specifically with the overhaul of the general rules, will begin in 2023.

### 1.6 | Risk management — Adopt a fully integrated risk management system

The deployment of an integrated risk management system continued, with the adoption of seven of the twelve constituent subsystems. The organization also established an integrated risk management committee, whose mandate provides for accountability to the Executive Committee and the Audit Committee of Héma-Québec’s BoD. The resilience policy and associated guideline were also approved.

### 1.7 | Internal audit function — Proceed with the development of the internal audit function

A first step in the development of the internal audit function was achieved with the creation of the Office of Internal Audit and the position of Director, Internal Audit. An individual experienced in regulatory auditing and performance and process auditing was hired to fill this position.

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Deployment of a service offering for the internal audit function	Under control	33%	100% (in 2023)
Updating of Héma-Québec’s general regulations in line with best practices	Under control	0%	100% (in 2024)

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 2 PLASMA SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND SAFE PRODUCT SUPPLY

## PRIORITIES

### 2.1 | Plasma self-sufficiency — Implement the plasma self-sufficiency program

Various projects of the plasma self-sufficiency program are under way to reach the plasma self-sufficiency target set by Héma-Québec for 2025-2026. These projects consist of the strategic analysis of technologies for the plasma collection and freezing process, the optimization of current centres, and the opening of new centres. The donor centres that will be opening in the coming years will be dedicated to plasma collection for fractionation and will improve the plasma donation offer in outlying areas.

### 2.2 | Human tissues — Identify and deploy human tissue development projects

Preparations continue in the human tissues sector in anticipation of the start of the sole distributor mandate granted to Héma-Québec by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, planned for the end of 2024. To support this mandate, the human tissues sector was prioritized on the PGI deployment roadmap. Various procurement and partnership strategies are being evaluated to optimize purchases while favouring self-sufficiency in tissues collected in Québec.

### 2.3 | Supply — Enhance planning and supply processes

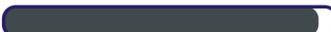
The strategic planning cycle foundations are now firmly in place in the labile blood products, mother's milk, stable products, and human tissues sectors. These solid bases enable Héma-Québec to accelerate deployment in the remaining stem cells and reference laboratories sectors. The alignment of various sectors around the donor-recipient axis for each of these sectors has been optimized, as well as the precision of planning activities.

### 2.4 | Blood drive operations — Review the planning of blood drives and the deployment of stable teams

The design of an automated planning process that enables a better assessment of workload capacity has been completed. Its configuration and deployment are pending. The review of many job structures favouring a stable workforce is under evaluation and deployment.

## Ensure an optimal supply of our products and increase self-sufficiency

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Percentage of plasma self-sufficiency – Self-sufficiency in intravenous immunoglobulins (IVIG) only	To be monitored	40% 	42%
Strategic planning cycle performed each quarter for all activity sectors (in compliance with the deployment timeline)	Under control	90%	Strategic planning cycle performed quarterly for all activity sectors

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 3 DONOR EXPERIENCE AND PARTNERS

## Mobilize Québec society to support Héma-Québec’s mission

### PRIORITIES

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

#### 3.1 | Acquisition, retention and donor experience — Attract new donors and reinforce the commitment and retention of donors through an enhanced experience

The return of blood drives in schools in fall 2022 and promotional efforts aimed at young adults contributed to an increase in new blood donors (20.6% vs. 16.5% last year) and in plasma donors (12.5% vs. 10%). The addition of the appointment reminder function by SMS in October 2022 resulted in a good level of commitment with more than 1,000 SMS reminders per week (instead of telephone reminders).

#### 3.2 | Recognition — Increase the recognition and influence of Héma-Québec and its activities in Québec, Canada and internationally

Héma-Québec continues to maintain its recognition level with Quebecers. New promotional campaigns were conducted with Black communities affected by sickle cell anemia, as well as with young adults to raise awareness of blood donation and make plasma donation better known. Targeted efforts were also made to recruit donors of mother’s milk and to diversify enrolment in the Stem Cell Donor Registry.

#### 3.3 | Acquisition, retention and volunteer experience — Attract and retain our pool of volunteers while ensuring the relevance of our volunteer model

Volunteers continued to generously support our activities in the permanent centres and mobile blood drives and public events. They helped actively recruit donors by staffing appointment booking booths and promoting plasma donation. The Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) youth wing now has more than 130 active members, including two cells at the Université de Montréal and McGill University.

#### 3.4 | Healthcare network — Consolidate our ties with healthcare network stakeholders, mainly hospitals and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

After completing a reassessment, six collection centres for the Public Cord Blood Bank were selected. Plans are to establish a roundtable of cord blood collection centres in 2023-2024 and to ensure a more regular presence in hospitals.

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
<b>Acquisition:</b> Percentage of new blood and plasma donors enrolled	<b>Under control</b>	Whole blood: <b>20.6%</b>	22%
		Plasma for fractionation: <b>12.5%</b>	13%
<b>Recognition:</b> Percentage of spontaneous recognition of Héma-Québec	<b>Under control</b>	<b>84%</b>	80%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 4 SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Reinforce and deploy our position as a leading scientific player

## PRIORITIES

### 4.1 | Positioning — Strengthen our position in matters of services and reference laboratory expertise with target groups

Enhanced content was added to our website in 2022-2023 to highlight the services offered by the reference laboratories, as well as the labile blood products available at Héma-Québec.

### 4.2 | Stem cells — Define and structure Héma-Québec’s role in the stem cell and cell therapy sector and obtain the ministerial mandate for the stem cell registry

The steering committee defined an action plan, and a history of Héma-Québec’s activities in the fields of stem cells and cellular therapies was completed. Steps are being taken to secure a contract with an outside firm to help Héma-Québec survey its external partners.

### 4.3 | Human tissues — Develop research collaborations

Preliminary discussions are under way with a potential partner to develop human tissue products not currently offered by Héma-Québec. A letter of interest was signed by the two parties in March 2023. The aim of this initiative is to maximize the number of products prepared from tissues collected in Québec.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Definition of the service offering for cell therapies and stem cells to network partners	Under control	15% 	100%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 4 SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (CONT'D)

Reinforce and deploy our position as a leading scientific player

## PRIORITIES

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

### 4.4 | New scientific services — Assess and deploy new leading-edge scientific services and a new range of biological products

- a) Fetal RhD: Contracts to purchase equipment and kits, as well as lease spaces, have been finalized. Discussions are under way with the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux to find a technological solution for sending Héma-Québec's results to hospitals. Following the sequencing of strategic initiatives, the project will be reactivated in November 2023.
- b) Sustainability of the biobank (PlasCov): Samples continue to be collected from plasma donations to supply the PlasCov biobank, whose objective is to serve the scientific community and public health authorities in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategies are being studied to ensure the sustainability of the biobank beyond the donor recruitment and sample collection period.
- c) BioArray genotyping platform: The equipment has been acquired, and validations are planned in spring 2023 to put the equipment into service the same year.

### 4.5 | Leading-edge scientific projects — Pursue research, studies and projects with high potential

- a) Research into emerging pathogens, epidemiology: Projects are under way in the field in collaboration with public health researchers, placing particular emphasis on evaluating the prevalence of anaplasmosis in donors and the seroprevalence of measles and other infectious agents.
- b) Reduction of pathogens: an assessment and optimization of the Intercept (Cerus) technology were initiated by the innovation sector. The aim is to apply the technology, between now and the end of 2024-2025, on part of the platelet inventories destined for transfusion.

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Deployment of services provided by fetal RhD and the BioArray genotyping platform	Under control	25% 	100%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 5 TALENT

## Build the future with competent, diversified and mobilized teams

### PRIORITIES

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

#### 5.1 | Employee experience — Retain, mobilize and enhance the well-being of employees by providing a work environment that offers enriching and rewarding opportunities in which our talent can progress

The project, including the establishment of an advisory committee and an incubator, was launched. The first wave of the survey was conducted among all employees, including group discussions on perceived experience and desired experience. Results were analyzed and disseminated. Feedback from this first survey was provided—a companion guide for presentations by managers and a video capsule addressed to all employees were produced.

#### 5.2 | Talent and succession management — Plan, acquire, develop and mobilize talent with a recognized employer brand

This was a record year for hiring required staff to support the mission. Attraction strategies, an employer brand and a new referral program were put in place. The teams also deployed ongoing efforts and paid close attention to retaining all the talent during a time of labour shortages. The overhaul of the welcome and integration program for new employees encourages a smoother entry into the job and individual support by managers. The first cross-sectional review of employees in critical and key posts was also conducted: a picture of the risks was drawn up, and the action plan is being implemented. An integrated solution for satisfaction surveys, among both recruits and employees who have left the organization, was adopted. The recognition program for retirees was improved—gifts are chosen based on seniority, and a guide of suggested activities for managers was created.

Indicator	Current* status	Progress to date	2025 target
Action plans to diagnose the employee experience deployed	Under control	25%	80%
Action plans implemented and reviewed annually for all critical and key positions	Under control	45%	95%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 5 TALENT (CONT'D)

## Build the future with competent, diversified and mobilized teams

### PRIORITIES

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

#### 5.3 | Skills development — Stimulate employees' learning and professional development of leadership skills and regulatory and professional competencies

The standardized professional skills development program was launched; the curriculum was enhanced, and a template for individual development plans was created. Leadership development pathways for four levels of management are in place—separating participants into cohorts is under way. A project has begun to optimize the regulatory training program through better planning and a “resource” capacity that corresponds to needs.

#### 5.4 | Environment, work organization and methods of collaboration — Enhance management culture and practices to provide an inspiring professional environment that fosters a balance between the needs for collaboration, organizational performance and socialization

Initiatives aimed at integrating best practices in establishing a balance between employees using telework and those working on site continue. The culture is evolving in terms of collaborative work methods, technologies that encourage the exchange of ideas, and the considerate organization of work.

#### 5.5 | Inclusion and diversity — Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment and foster the cultural diversity of profiles and prospects at all levels of the organization

A new integrated diversity and inclusion program is being developed; the validation of initiatives and best practices continues. In the wake of implementing new eligibility criteria for our donors, training sessions and awareness workshops were set up. Discussion groups were held with staff regarding the realities of LGBTQ+ communities; analyses are being done. Training on harassment prevention for managers and on civility for employees was initiated.

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Participation of managers at all levels in a comprehensive path to a new leadership development program	Under control	25%	85%
Development and professional training program deployed	Under control	60%	100%
Implementation of an enhanced introductory regulatory training program for new employees	Under control	75%	80%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# 6 SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ENTERPRISE

## Consolidate our position as a socially responsible enterprise

### PRIORITIES

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

#### 6.1 | Governance — Acquire clear governance (roles and mechanisms) in line with our priorities as a socially responsible enterprise

A strategically positioned governance has been developed and is currently being implemented. It is supported by the Strategic Office of Integrated Communications (SOIC), which has been designated to oversee social responsibility, including sustainable development.

#### 6.2 | Communication and accountability — Review our approach to internal communications and accountability

The 2022-2023 annual accountability reporting to the Government of Québec was completed and is presented in detail on pages 69 and 70 of this report. We held many workshops on sustainable development for employees.

#### 6.3 | Aspirations and mobilizing actions — Showcase our achievements, develop a new five-year plan in line with the *Sustainable Development Act* and deploy actions to achieve tangible results

The Office of Government Relations and Social Responsibility was created within the SOIC, and the position of director was filled in January 2023. Preparatory work on drafting a 2023-2028 action plan for sustainable development has been completed.

Indicator	Current status*	Progress to date	2025 target
Percentage of achievement of the 2023-2028 five-year sustainable development plan	Under control	5% 	40%
Measurement of employee commitment to activities (survey)	Under control	0% 	70%

\*Under control: the planned timeline for reaching the target in 2025 is being met.  
To be monitored: reaching the target in 2025 is at risk.

# GOING BEYOND AND ABOVE IN STAYING ON COURSE

Governance



**Fabrizio,**  
signed up for the  
Stem Cell Donor  
Registry

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**The Act to reinforce the governance of state-owned enterprises and to amend other legislative provisions entered into force on June 3, 2022. This Act subjects Héma-Québec to the Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises (AGSE), imposing on the organization new disclosure obligations in its annual report. While it was already Héma-Québec's practice to disclose most of the information required, some information was added for the reference period to conform with these new obligations.**

Héma-Québec's activities are governed by a board of directors made up of members representing a balance of experience and expertise aligned with the organization's activities, as well as various stakeholders in the transfusion chain.

## Mandate of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors mandate is to adopt the organization's strategic plan, as well as its budget and financial statements. The Board also ensures the implementation of effective control and risk management systems. To fulfill its mandate, the Board is supported by three standing committees (the Governance and Ethics Committee, the Audit Committee, and the Human Resources and Compensation Committee), as well as by an Information Resources Committee. In addition, the Board receives recommendations from three advisory committees established under the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee* (the Recipient Representatives Advisory Committee, the Safety Advisory Committee, and the Scientific and Medical Advisory Committee), in addition to delegating its decision-making power to a Research Ethics Committee. The composition of all these committees is presented in detail in this section of the annual report

## Composition of the Board of Directors

- 12 members named by the government
- A president and CEO

Members come from the following categories:

- Blood donors and volunteers
- Recipients
- Presidents and CEOs and chief executives of public institutions (health)
- Physicians
- Public health community
- Scientific research community
- Business community
- Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés du Québec
- Héma-Québec (president and CEO)

Members are named by the government (except for the president and CEO) after consultation with the persons or communities in the categories mentioned above.

During the year, the mandates of some board members were renewed by the government, whereas Réal Couture and Pierre Thivierge stepped down from their functions as directors toward the end of this fiscal year.

## Nomination process

- Applications are sought from persons and communities in these categories.
- Applications are analyzed by the Governance and Ethics Committee based on certain criteria:
  - source of nominations according to the categories listed above;
  - professional skills profile, in particular finance and accounting, governance and ethics, transfusion medicine (or other relevant specialty), information technology, human resources, public and government relations, legal and judicial affairs, production and operations.
- Recommendation of the Governance and Ethics Committee to the board.
- Submission of the applicants' files to the government, which makes a selection from among the applications submitted.

## Activities and main areas of interest in 2022-2023

In addition to more specific areas of interest covered in the standing committee reports, the Board also dealt with the following matters:

- Follow-up of the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan (with the presentation of a theme related to a strategic direction for each meeting).
- 2022-2023 organizational objectives.
- Status of the supply of labile blood products and plasma destined for fractionation.
- Action plan in response to information security and cybersecurity issues.
- Gender-neutral approach to various types of donation.

### Mandates of the members

- Four-year term renewable twice, consecutively or not
- Five-year term for the president and CEO

### Parity

The composition of the board complies with gender parity:

- Seven women
- Six men

### Breakdown by age group

- 40 to 49: two
- 50 to 59: five
- 60 and over: six
- Average age: 59 years

### Independence and remuneration of members

All board members are independent from Héma-Québec, with the exception of the president and CEO.

Board members were not remunerated for 2022-2023. In accordance with the provisions of the *Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises* and government decree 221-2023, directors will only be remunerated as of fiscal 2023-2024. They could, however, be compensated for actual loss of salary or income (based on the provisions of a government decree) resulting from their attendance at meetings or other gatherings.

The table below shows the amounts claimed for the period of April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

Members	Amounts claimed in 2022-2023
Jean-Marie Leclerc	\$700
Patricia Pelletier	\$1,750
Daniel Tremblay	-
Pierre Thivierge	-
Réal Couture	-
Jacques Gédéon	-
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	\$1,575
Anne Bourhis	-
Stéphanie Austin	-
Patricia Hudson	\$175
Caroline Barbir	-
Caroline Banville	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,200</b>

### Meetings in 2022-2023

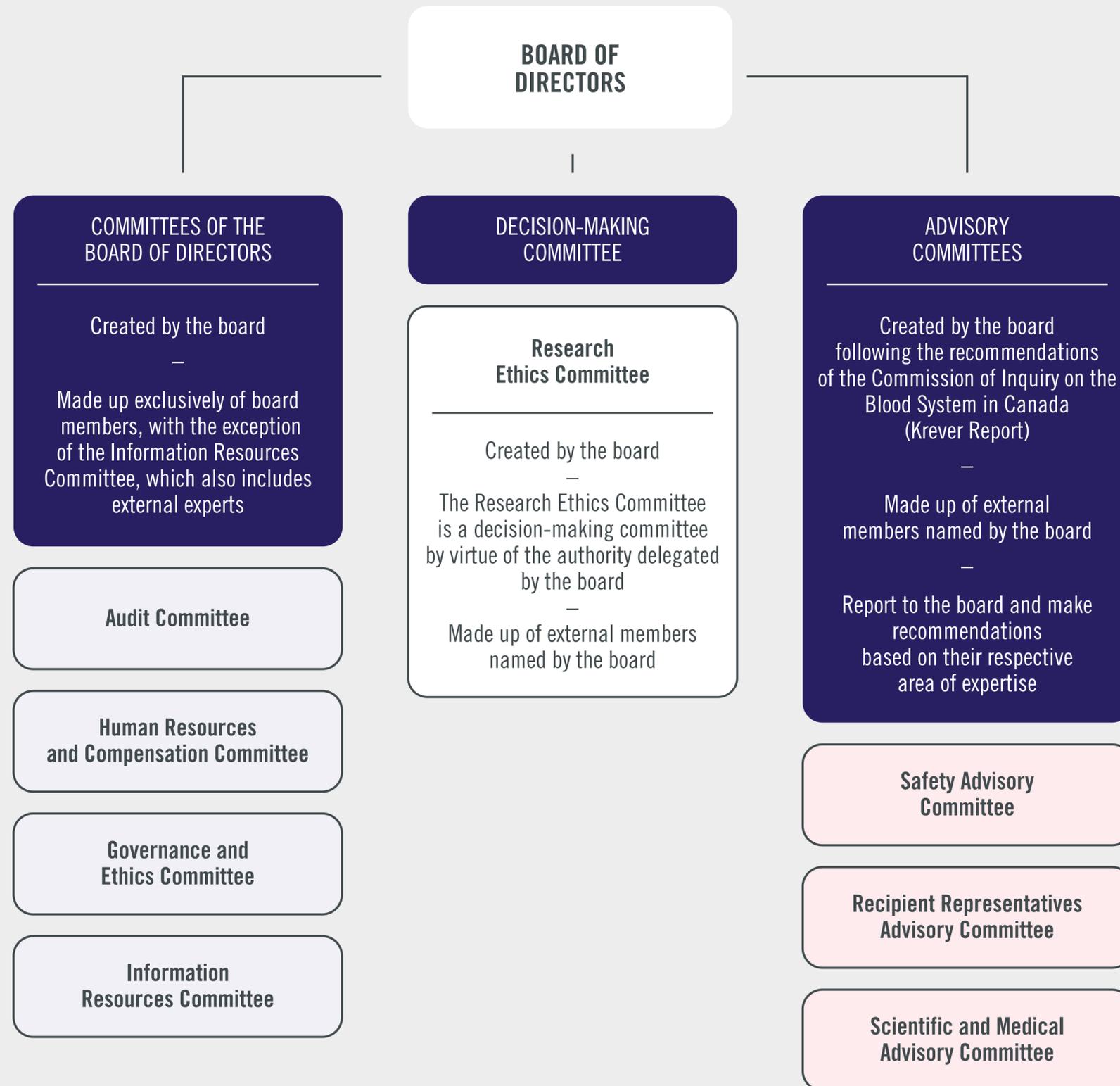
- 8 board meetings: six regular, one extraordinary and one joint meeting with the executive committee (management);
- 19 meetings of the board's committees: 18 regular and one extraordinary;
- Attendance rate\* at board and committee meetings: 92%.

All meetings of the board and its committees include a closed-door discussion period, without the presence of management. However, part of the closed-door period is attended by the president and CEO.

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Anne Bourhis	8	8
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	8	5
Nathalie Fagnan	8	8
Daniel Tremblay	8	8
Patricia Hudson	8	6
Caroline Barbir	8	6
Jacques Gédéon	8	7
Jean-Marie Leclerc	8	8
Patricia Pelletier	8	8
Stéphanie Austin	8	7
Caroline Banville	8	7
Pierre Thivierge	8	7
Réal Couture	8	8

\*Section 3.18 of the general regulations provides that directors may dismiss a director who, during a period of 12 consecutive months, is absent from more than three meetings.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ITS COMMITTEES



# MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY



**Anne Bourhis**  
*Chair*

Full Professor  
Human Resources Management Department  
HEC Montréal

BUSINESS COMMUNITY



**Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine, Atty**  
*Vice-Chair*

General Manager  
TACT Conseils

HÉMA-QUÉBEC



**Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A**  
*Secretary*

President and Chief Executive Officer  
Héma-Québec

PUBLIC HEALTH



**Dr. Patricia Hudson**

Scientific Director  
Direction des risques biologiques  
Institut national de santé publique du Québec

PRESIDENTS AND CEOS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS\*

COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS DU QUÉBEC

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY

RECIPIENTS



**Caroline Barbir**

President and General Manager  
Centre hospitalier universitaire  
Sainte-Justine



**Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc**

Hematologist-Oncologist  
Centre hospitalier universitaire  
Sainte-Justine



**Dr. Patricia Pelletier, MD, FRCPC**

Director of the Transfusion  
Medicine Department  
McGill University Health Centre



**Stéphanie Austin**

Full Professor  
Département de gestion des ressources humaines  
École de gestion, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières



**Daniel Tremblay**

Member  
Fondation de la greffe de moelle osseuse de l'Est du Québec

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

ORDRE DES COMPTABLES PROFESSIONNELS AGRÉÉS DU QUÉBEC

BUSINESS COMMUNITY



**Jacques Gédéon**

President  
Association des bénévoles du don de sang, Outaouais chapter



**Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC\*\***

Corporate Director



**Caroline Banville**

Partner  
Consulting and Deals  
PricewaterhouseCoopers



**Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A\*\***

President, Octium Solutions Inc  
Chief Financial Officer,  
Quadra Chimie

\* Within the meaning of the *Act respecting health services and social services*.

\*\* Réal Couture and Pierre Thivierge stepped down from their functions as directors on February 23, 2023.

## BIOGRAPHY OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Anne Bouhris**  
*Chair*

Anne Bourhis holds a PhD in Organizational Behaviour from the University of Illinois and an MSc in Human Resources Management from HEC Montréal. She has worked in the field since 1999. She is currently a full professor in the Department of Human Resources Management and education director of the University Competitions Service. Previously, she served as department head (2006-2012) and director of the Master of Management Sciences program (2013-2016).

Her area of specialty focuses primarily on new staff recruitment and selection practices. An invited speaker at many professional and scientific symposia, she is a member of several scientific associations.



**Dr. Patricia Hudson**  
*Member*

Dr. Hudson holds a degree in medicine from the Université de Montréal (1985) and obtained a master's in public health degree from Columbia University (1998). In 1999, she focused on public health and completed her residency in community medicine at McGill University (2004). In 2005, she assumed the position of coordinator of infectious diseases at the Direction de santé publique de Laval. From 2007 to 2016, she held similar positions at the Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie. Since 2016, she has been the scientific director of the Bio-Risk Department at the INSPQ.



**Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine, Atty**  
*Vice-Chair*

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine holds a Bachelor of Science degree (Neurobiology) from McGill University, as well as a Bachelor and a Master of Laws from the Université de Sherbrooke. He is also certified as a corporate director by the Institute of Corporate Directors.

He has sat or sits on multiple boards of directors, including the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec, Héma-Québec, BioQuébec, the Regroupement en soins de santé personnalisés au Québec (RSSPQ), the NEOMED Institute, and Arion Orchestre Baroque. Among other things, he was involved in creating and expanding the NEOMED Institute and, more recently, in aligning Montréal's artificial intelligence sector with the pharmaceutical industry.



**Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A**  
*Secretary*

Nathalie Fagnan holds a Bachelor's in Business Administration from HEC Montréal, is a member of the Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés du Québec and is certified as a corporate director by the Institute of Corporate Directors. She has held several executive-level positions within internationally renowned companies.

Among these, she was executive vice-president and chief operating officer at Publicis North America. Previously, she served as executive vice-president and chief operating officer at the firm Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton (RCGT), and executive vice-president and chief financial officer at Publicis Canada. She has been president and CEO at Héma-Québec since 2019.



**Caroline Barbir**  
*Member*

Caroline Barbir is an experienced administrator and has been a member of the Ordre des administrateurs agréés du Québec since 1998. She holds a Bachelor of Biology (Human Genetics) degree (1979) and a master's in health administration degree (1982). In 1984, she served as director of hospital, technical and placement services at the Montréal Chest Institute. From 1989 to 2015, she successively held the position of chief executive officer at six different health institutions. From 2015 to 2018, she was president and CEO of the CISSS de Laval. Since 2018, she has held the position of president and CEO of the CHU Sainte-Justine.



**Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc**  
*Member*

A pediatric hematologist-oncologist, Dr. Leclerc recently retired after 35 years with the CHU Sainte-Justine, where he helped establish clinical research programs for various pediatric diseases.

From 1996 to 2012, he reduced his clinical activities at the CHU Sainte-Justine to concentrate on developing new drugs for the Canadian pharmaceutical industry. Upon his return full-time to the CHU Sainte-Justine, he put this experience to work for the benefit of patients. Since January 2022, he has also acted as consultant on various pharmaceutical and medical projects.



**Dr. Patricia Pelletier, MD, FRCPC**  
Member

After graduating in medicine from McGill University (1998), Dr. Pelletier chose to specialize in hematology to perfect her knowledge of cellular therapy research before pursuing her studies at the New York Blood Center, with a fellowship in transfusion medicine and additional training in immunogenetics and histocompatibility.

She has been working at the McGill University Health Centre as a hematologist and director of transfusion medicine since 2007. She also holds the position of RUIS expert in transfusion medicine for McGill University.



**Stéphanie Austin**  
Member

Stéphanie Austin holds a PhD in psychology and a Master's in Epidemiology from the Université Laval. Since 2010, she has held the position of professor in the Department of Human Resources Management at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières. In 2016, she obtained tenure and manages the Groupe de recherche Motivation Mieux-Être. To date, she has published 50 scientific articles and book chapters on the health of individuals and organizations.

She also acts as a resource person for governance (École de gestion of the UQTR, board of directors of the Séminaire Saint-Joseph) and research, especially as a reviewer at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).



**Daniel Tremblay**  
Member

Daniel Tremblay holds bachelor's degrees in IT management and bioagronomy and has developed expertise in new technologies. He contributed to the computerization of numerous government agencies and departments. From 2013 to 2016, he headed the Direction des infrastructures et du soutien aux utilisateurs of the Commission administrative des régimes de retraites et d'assurances. He was also a member of the Biovigilance Committee from 2003 to 2019 and served as its chair from 2005 to 2017.

For several years now, he has been increasingly involved with the Fondation de la greffe de moelle osseuse de l'Est du Québec.



**Jacques Gédéon**  
Member

Jacques Gédéon is very involved in the field of communications. He spent 18 years at the Société Radio-Canada in a variety of positions, including reporter and assistant manager of French-language television programming in the National Capital Region. From 1991 to his retirement in 2007, he managed the National Capital Commission's radio and television section.

Since then, he has devoted his time as president of the Ottawa chapter of the Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS). He also shares his vast experience in support of several community activities in his region.



**Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC**  
Member

Réal Couture is a Fellow of the Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés du Québec (FCPA, FCA) and carries the designation of Administrateur de sociétés certifié (ASC). He held the position of vice-president, finance and administration at SÉPAQ from 1990 to 2010, and at the Montréal Port Authority from 2010 to 2019. He has been a speaker, notably at the Association des MBA du Québec and HEC Montréal, and a facilitator of training sessions at the Ordre des CPA.

He is also a member of the professional orders' ethics and professional conduct inquiry committees and a member of the elections oversight committee of the Ordre des CPA.



**Caroline Banville**  
Member

A graduate of Polytechnique Montréal (1993), Caroline Banville began her career as a senior engineer at Teleglobe Canada. She went on to work in the United States at Teleglobe USA and Startec Global Communications, subsequently holding various positions as assistant IT director (Nextel Communications) and IT director at Sprint Nextel and YRCW Technologies.

Upon her return to Canada in 2007, she assumed the position of vice-president in the consulting services department of CGI. After nine years with this business consulting company, she became the national consulting leader for the technology, media and telecommunications practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers.



**Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A**  
Member

Pierre Thivierge holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (Accounting) degree and an accreditation from the Rotman-ICD Directors Education program. He has more than 30 years of experience in the financial field. From 1986 to 1997, he held the positions of auditor and comptroller. He subsequently became president of finance at Schering-Plough and Baker Cummins Inc., and then management consultant at Atkinson & Associates until 2004.

Pierre Thivierge is chief financial officer at Quadra Chemicals Ltd, in addition to holding the position of president of Solutions Octium Inc.

## INFORMATION OF PUBLIC INTEREST ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Member	Date of nomination	End of mandate	Place of residence	Age	Seniority	Membership in boards of directors of other associations
Anne Bourhis	September 13, 2017	September 13, 2021*	Montréal	55	6 years and 7 months	Investissement Québec
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty	March 23, 2016 (renewed : June 29, 2022)	June 29, 2026	Boucherville	54	7 years	Q-CROC, Arion Orchestre Baroque
Nathalie Fagnan	January 30, 2019 (renewed: October 8, 2021)	October 8, 2026	Montréal	57	4 years and 3 months	La Presse, Groupe La Veillée (Théâtre Prospero), Héma-Québec Foundation
Daniel Tremblay	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Québec	65	3 years and 3 months	None
Dr. Patricia Hudson	January 29, 2020	December 13, 2021*	Montréal	61	6 years and 4 months	None
Caroline Barbir	October 19, 2016 (renewed: June 29, 2022)	June 29, 2026	Montréal	65	7 years and 6 months	Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine
Jacques Gédéon	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Gatineau	73	3 years and 3 months	Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) - Outaouais chapter, Fondation Culture Outaouais, Mixmédiarts
Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc	February 26, 2014 (renewed: January 29, 2020)	January 29, 2024	Laval	69	9 years and 2 months	None
Dr. Patricia Pelletier	September 13, 2017	September 13, 2021*	Montréal	48	6 years and 7 months	None
Stéphanie Austin	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Trois-Rivières	45	3 years and 3 months	Conseil d'administration du Séminaire Saint-Joseph, Trois-Rivières
Caroline Banville	January 29, 2020	December 13, 2021*	Montréal	52	6 years and 4 months	None
Pierre Thivierge	March 23, 2016 (renewed: June 29, 2022)	June 29, 2026**	Montréal	59	7 years	Gestion Infilise, Hydro Technologies (Canada)
Réal Couture	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024**	Québec	63	3 years and 3 months	None

\* Upon expiry of their mandate, members remain on the board until they are either replaced or nominated again.

\*\* Pierre Thivierge and Réal Couture stepped down from their functions as directors on February 23, 2023.

# BOARD COMMITTEES

The board of directors and its committees assume the statutory responsibilities described in the general regulations. These bodies deal with files specific to each of their areas of interest.

## GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

**Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine, Atty**, Chair

**Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC\***

**Dr. Patricia Hudson**

All committee members are independent.  
\* Member up to February 23, 2023.

### Mandate

The Governance and Ethics Committee is tasked with establishing the rules of governance, the competency and experience profiles for the nomination of board members, and the criteria for evaluating the operation of the Board.

### Activities and main areas of interest

The topics dealt with during the year stem essentially from the committee's mandate, such as following up the composition of the Board and its committees, securing nominations for the Board (based on the established profiles), and evaluating the operation of the Board.

An evaluation of the operation of the Board was completed in November 2021, in accordance with a two-year evaluation cycle. However, with Héma-Québec subject to the *Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises*, the cycle will now be annual and such evaluation will be planned for 2023. The results for 2021 identified some areas for improvement, although no major issue arose regarding governance in general. Otherwise, the committee closely followed the amendments to the AGSE and the implications for new obligations for Héma-Québec. It also conducted a review of the annual report, suggesting changes where necessary.

### Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
<b>Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Patricia Hudson	3	3
Réal Couture	3	3

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

**Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC**, Chair<sup>1</sup>

**Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A<sup>2</sup>**

**Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc**

All committee members are independent.  
<sup>1</sup> Chair and member up to February 23, 2023. <sup>2</sup> Member up to February 23, 2023. <sup>3</sup> Interim Chair since April 26, 2023. <sup>4</sup> Member since December 1, 2022.

### Mandate

The Audit Committee is tasked with recommending the adoption of an annual internal audit plan to the Board, ensuring that internal control mechanisms and a risk management plan are in place, examining financial statements with the Auditor General and the external auditor named by the government, and recommending approval to the Board.

An audit plan of the financial statements is first presented to the Audit Committee by the Auditor General of Québec's representative and the external auditors (before examination of the financial statements later in the year). This plan includes various headings, such as the scope of the audit and the auditors' fees. For fiscal 2022-2023, these totalled \$118,900 before taxes – i.e., \$47,500 for auditing financial statements and \$71,400 for studying the geolocation of future plasma donor centres.

### Activities and main areas of interest

The Audit Committee conducted many follow-ups and noted some financial reporting along the following themes:

- Budget and finance: budget monitoring (anticipated government authorization, for example) and other milestones in the budget cycle (for example, budgetary assumptions, projections and financial results, recommendation for the adoption of the budget by the Board).
- Accountability: action plan in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General of Québec (performance audit), 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, dashboard of labile blood products and plasma for fractionation, annual update of the plan for the shortage of labile blood products, service contracts in excess of \$25,000 (in accordance with the *Act respecting workforce management and control – AWMC*).

**Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine, Atty**, Interim Chair<sup>3</sup>

**Caroline Banville<sup>4</sup>**

- Risk management: integrated risk management report and summary of the Integrated Risk Management Committee activities, insurance coverages, cybersecurity action plan.
- Audit activities: program and schedule of internal audits, report on the observations of regulatory inspections and resulting action plan (with project indicators to ensure follow-up), processes for developing the internal audit function.

Apart from these areas of interest, the Audit Committee also recommended the approval of the realignment of the plasma self-sufficiency strategy to the Board (which includes deploying plasma donor centres), as well as the adoption of policies, such as the resilience policy, the procurement policy and the asset management and maintenance policy. The committee also reviewed the annual report, mainly ensuring that the financial information (i.e., financial statements) was compliant.

### Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
<b>Réal Couture</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Pierre Thivierge	7	5
Jean-Marie Leclerc	7	6
Caroline Banville*	1	1

\* Member since December 1, 2022.

# BOARD COMMITTEES

## HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

**Anne Bourhis**, Chair

**Stéphanie Austin**

**Caroline Barbir**

All committee members are independent.

### Mandate

The Human Resources Committee is tasked with examining human resources orientations and policies, reviewing and recommending the approval of staff working conditions to the Board, evaluating the president and chief executive officer and making recommendations to the Board in this regard, and approving vice-president nominations upon the recommendation of the president and chief executive office.

### Activities and main areas of interest

In keeping with the mandate cited above, the committee looked into the following:

- Mandate requests to the Board regarding structure and salary scales.
- Status of collective agreement negotiations.
- Review of critical posts and key posts (integrated talent and succession management program).
- Recruitment process for the vice-president of finance and infrastructure.
- Presentation of various programs (enhanced or new): leadership development, professional skills development, employee experience program, retirement program.

### Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
<b>Anne Bourhis</b>	5	5
Caroline Barbir	5	4
Stéphanie Austin	5	5

## INFORMATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**Caroline Banville**, Chair

**Daniel Tremblay**

**Michèle Bureau**<sup>1</sup>

Consultant, Information Technology and Electronic Affairs, Bureau et Associés

**Robert Charbonneau**<sup>1</sup>

Information Technology Consultant

**Sonia Israel**<sup>2</sup>

Chief Technology Officer, Nurau

**Adrian Glaman**<sup>2</sup>

Vice-President, Consulting Services, Transportation & Logistics, Life science, CGI

### DIRECTOR MEMBERS

### EXTERNAL MEMBERS

All committee members are independent.

<sup>1</sup> Member up to December 1, 2022. <sup>2</sup> Member since December 1, 2022.

### Mandate

The Information Resources Committee mandate consists of ensuring good governance of the information resources, more specifically that the information held by Héma-Québec is protected, available and complete, that the technological solutions meet operational needs, and that the management of sums intended for information resources is transparent and rigorous.

### Activities and main areas of interest

In keeping with its mandate, the committee dealt primarily with the following:

- The organization of the vice-president's office of information technologies and digital strategy, as well as its 2022-2023 objectives.
- Deployment (roadmap) of the integrated management software package (PGI).
- Update of eProgesa.
- Information system on the traceability of blood products (SIATH).
- Operational planning and job placement management project (POA).

- Security management status (incident follow-up and the cybersecurity action plan).
- Update on material assets and software (IT).
- Reporting related to the *Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises (AGMIR)*, as well as the various policies and directives of the Ministère de la Cybersécurité et du Numérique.

### Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
<b>Caroline Banville</b>	4	4
Daniel Tremblay	4	4

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

### RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
COCQ-SIDA	<b>Michel Morin</b> , <i>Chair</i>
ASSOCIATION DES PATIENTS IMMUNODÉFICIENTS DU QUÉBEC	<b>Geneviève Solomon</b> , <i>Interim Chair and Vice-Chair</i>
	<b>Martine Allard</b>
SICKLE CELL ANEMIA ASSOCIATION OF QUÉBEC	<b>Marlin Akplogan</b>
	<b>Wilson Sanon</b>
LEUCAN	<b>Pierre Verret</b>
LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY OF CANADA	<b>Qi Li</b>
BOARD OBSERVER	<b>Daniel Tremblay</b>

All committee members are independent.

### SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE	<b>David Page</b> , <i>Chair</i> Consultant, Safety and Supply of Coagulation Products, Canadian Hemophilia Society, Montréal, Canada
	<b>Dr. Susan Stramer</b> Vice-President of Scientific Affairs, Biomedical Services, American Red Cross, Gaithersburg, Maryland, United States
	<b>Dr. Hans L. Zaaijer</b> Professor, Blood-borne Infections, Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation, University Medical Centers, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
INFECTIOUS DISEASES	<b>Dr. Louis M. Katz</b> Chief Medical Officer Emeritus, ImpactLife Blood Services, Davenport, Iowa, United States Adjunct Clinical Professor of Infectious Diseases and Medicine, Roy and Lucille Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa, United States
	<b>Dr. Jutta Preiksaitis</b> Professor Emeritus, Division of Infectious Diseases, Faculty of Medicine, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
EPIDEMIOLOGY	<b>Dr. Steven Kleinman</b> Biomedical Consultant, Victoria, Canada Clinical Professor, Department of Pathology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
	<b>Dr. Luiz Amorim</b> President and Chief Executive Officer, Hemorio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
	<b>Dr. Rebecca Cardigan</b> National Head of Component Development, NHS Blood and Transplant, Cambridge, United Kingdom
TRANSFUSION MEDICINE AND PRACTICES	<b>Dr. Pierre Tiberghien</b> Professor of Medicine, Immunology, Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France Senior Advisor for Medical and Scientific Affairs, Europe and International, Établissement français du sang, La Plaine Saint Denis (Paris), France President, European Blood Alliance (EBA)
CANADIAN BLOOD SERVICES	<b>Dr. Steven Drews</b> Associate Director, Microbiology, Canadian Blood Services Associate Professor, Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
BOARD OBSERVER	<b>Dr. Patricia Pelletier</b> Director of Transfusion Medicine, McGill University Health Centre, Montréal, Canada

All committee members are independent.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

### SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
IMMUNOLOGY	<p><b>Yves St-Pierre, Chair</b> Full Professor, Centre Armand-Frappier Santé Biotechnologie, Institut national de la recherche scientifique. Laval, Canada</p>
IMMUNOHEMATOLOGY, GENOTYPING	<p><b>Greg Denomme</b> Laboratory Director and Head of Research and Development, Grifols Laboratory Solutions Inc., San Marcos, Texas, United States</p>
EPIDEMIOLOGY OF TRANSFUSION	<p><b>Dean Fergusson</b> Director and Senior Scientist, Clinical Epidemiology Program Full Professor, Departments of Medicine and Surgery, and School of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Ottawa Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Ottawa, Canada</p>
TRANSFUSION, CELLULAR THERAPIES, IMMUNOLOGY	<p><b>Dr. Magali Fontaine</b> Professor of Pathology and Medicine, Director of Transfusion Services, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, United States</p> <p><b>Dr. Jean-Sébastien Delisle</b> Medical Director, Centre of Excellence in Cell Therapy (CETC), Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont - Institut universitaire d'hémo-oncologie et thérapie cellulaire Full professor, Department of Microbiology, Infectiology and Immunology, Faculty of Medicine, Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada</p>
HUMAN TISSUES	<p><b>Dr. Marisa Herson</b> Chair, Eye and Tissue Advisory Committee, Australian Organ and Tissue Authority, Canberra, Australia Honorary Associate Professor, Faculty of Health, Department of Ethics, Law and Professionalism, School of Medicine, Deakin University, Australia</p>
TRANSFUSION MEDICINE	<p><b>Dr. Richard Kaufman</b> Medical Director, Transfusion Service, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, United States Associate Professor of Pathology, Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States Editor-in-Chief, <i>Transfusion</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Vincent Laroche</b> Hematologist and co-director of the blood bank, Director of the therapeutic apheresis and stem cell collection unit, CHU de Québec-Université Laval Medical expert in transfusion medicine, Réseau universitaire intégré de santé (RUIS) de l'Université Laval, CHU de Québec-Université Laval Québec City, Canada</p> <p><b>Pieter van der Meer</b> Senior Scientist, Department of Product and Process Development, Sanquin Blood Bank, Amsterdam, The Netherlands Research Coordinator, Hematology Department, Haga Teaching Hospital, The Hague, The Netherlands</p>
BIOLOGY, IMMUNOLOGY, (MOLECULAR) HEMATOLOGY	<p><b>Tarik Möröy</b> Director, Hematopoiesis &amp; Cancer Research Unit, and Full Research Professor, Montréal Clinical Research Institute, Montréal, Canada</p>
TRANSFUSION, PRENATAL TRANSFUSION MEDICINE	<p><b>Dr. Chantale Pambrun</b> Senior Medical Director, Innovation and Portfolio Management, Canadian Blood Services Adjunct Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada</p>

# DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE

## RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH	<p><b>Clermont Dionne, Chair</b> Full Professor and Director, Department of social and preventative medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec – Université Laval, population health and optimal health practices axis, Québec City, Canada and Centre d'excellence sur le vieillissement de Québec (CEVQ), CIUSSS de la Capitale-Nationale, Québec City, Canada</p>
	<p><b>Patrick J. Rochette</b> Full Professor, Department of ophthalmology and ENT, head and neck surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec, Université Laval, regenerative medicine axis, Québec City, Canada</p>
	<p><b>Jacques J. Tremblay</b> Full professor, Department of obstetrics, gynecology and reproduction, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec – Université Laval, reproduction, mother and child health axis, Québec City, Canada</p>
LAW	<p><b>Geneviève Cardinal, Atty, Vice-Chair</b> Head, Bureau de l'éthique de la recherche, Chair of the Research Ethics Committee, Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine, Montréal, Canada</p>
LAW, SUBSTITUTE LAWYER	<p><b>Alexandra Sweeney-Beaudry</b> Attorney, Health Law, Borden Ladner Gervais (BLG) Lecturer in the Master's in Health Law and Policy program, Law Faculty, Université de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Canada</p>
BLOOD DONORS	<p><b>Pierre Galarneau</b> Donor and volunteer, Association des bénévoles du don de sang, Montréal, Canada</p>
RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE, ETHICIST	<p><b>Michel Morin</b> Assistant Director, COCQ-SIDA, Montréal, Canada</p>
RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (substitute member)	<p><b>Pierre Verret</b> Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Nursing Sciences, Université Laval, Québec City, Canada Associate member of Leucan</p>
SUBSTITUTE ETHICIST	<p><b>Johane de Champlain, Atty</b> Vice-Chair and Ethics Advisor, Comité central d'éthique de la recherche (MSSS), Montréal, Canada</p>

All committee members are independent.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



**Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A**  
President and Chief Executive Officer



**Dr. Marc Germain, MD, PhD, FRCPC**  
Vice-President, Medical Affairs and Innovation



**Sébastien Gignac, Atty  
BA (Hons), MA, BCL, LL.B.**  
Vice-President, General Secretariat, Risks and Auditing



**Annie Gingras, BSc, MBA**  
Vice-President, Quality and Development



**Patrick Hardy, MSc, MBA**  
Vice-President, Information Technology  
and Digital Strategy



**Geneviève LeBrun, MSc**  
Vice-President, Client Experience and  
Business Intelligence



**Luc Lévesque**  
Vice-President, Blood Products and  
Mother's Milk



**Christine Ouimet, Eng., MBA**  
Vice-President, Supply Chain



**Dr. Nancy Robitaille, MD, FRCPC**  
Vice-President, Transfusion Medicine



**Luc Vermeersch, CPA\***  
Vice-President, Finance and  
Infrastructure (outgoing)



**Dawn Singerman, CPA\*\***  
Vice-President, Finance and  
Infrastructure (incoming)



**Roselyne Zombecki, CRIA**  
Vice-President, People, Culture and  
Leadership

The composition of the board complies with gender parity: seven women, five men.

\* Luc Vermeersch retired at the end of fiscal 2022-2023.  
\*\* Dawn Singerman took up her position on March 6, 2023.

## REMUNERATION OF SENIOR EXECUTIVES\* - FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023

Name	Position	Basic remuneration paid <sup>1</sup>	Contribution to retirement plans assumed by Héma-Québec	Other benefits paid or granted <sup>2</sup>	Total remuneration for the fiscal year
Nathalie Fagnan	President and Chief Executive Officer	\$391,663	\$29,457	\$18,500	\$439,620
Dr. Marc Germain	Vice-President, Medical Affairs and Innovation	\$360,611	\$28,360	\$15,369	\$404,341
Dr. Nancy Robitaille	Vice-President, Transfusion Medicine	\$268,359	\$22,982	\$13,307	\$304,649
Luc Vermeersch	Vice-President, Finance and Infrastructure	\$250,914	\$24,850	\$14,133	\$289,898
Sébastien Gignac	Vice-President, General Secretariat, Risks and Auditing	\$248,105	\$25,036	\$14,228	\$287,370
Dr. Christian Renaud	Medical Director – Microbiology and epidemiology	\$257,159	\$20,338	\$12,738	\$290,235

\* These are the "five highest-paid senior executives", with the exception of Dr. Christian Renaud, who is one of the executives who does not report directly to the President and CEO, but whose compensation exceeds the one of at least one of the said five senior executives.

<sup>1</sup> Héma-Québec does not offer a variable remuneration program.

<sup>2</sup> This amount includes sums paid by Héma-Québec for group insurance, the health spending benefit and annual health check-up.

# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN BEING METHODICAL

Legislative requirements



**Maryska,**  
signed up for the  
Stem Cell Donor  
Registry

# COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

List of laws, regulations and policies that contain the legal obligations of Héma-Québec:

- *Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises*
- *Sustainable Development Act*
- *Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif*
- *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*
- *Politique gouvernementale relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'Administration*
- *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information*
- *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*
- *Politique de financement des services publics*
- *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*
- *Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises*
- *Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises*

## Sustainable Development Act

Published in June 2022, Héma-Québec's 2022-2023 Sustainable Development Action Plan (PADD) is a transition action plan intended to be an essential premise for the next 2023-2028 five-year sustainable development plan. The action plan was drafted in response to section 15 of the *Sustainable Development Act* (SDA) for the period from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, and is based on the directive from the MELCCFP (Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte aux changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs). The PADD is structured around the following strategic orientation and objectives:

### Governmental orientation 1 – Strengthen sustainable development governance in the public service

**Governmental orientation 1.1** : Strengthen consideration of sustainable development principles

- **Action 1** – Measure the level of integration of sustainable development at Héma-Québec using the BNQ 21000 reference standard, which was designed to help organizations implement sustainable development.

The baseline includes 21 issues covering four major themes: environmental, economic, social and cross-sectional. Using self-assessment grids, Héma-Québec will diagnose the level of integration of sustainable development in its organization. This diagnosis will serve as a benchmark to fuel thinking and the exchange of ideas, as well as to determine the next steps to be taken to increase the level of consideration of sustainable development principles, one of the key elements of the governmental process.

- **Action 2** – Raise awareness among employees of the integration of sustainable development in their practices.

To increase awareness of the role of each employee in the level of integration of sustainable development, Héma-Québec will disseminate the (BNQ 21000) diagnosis. The hope is to encourage employee involvement in advancing sustainable development through its practices and to facilitate the future adoption of actions and behaviours arising out of the self-assessment. An announcement will also be made about consultations with employees, by target groups, that will be held to support action 3.

In the end, Héma-Québec will also be better positioned to contribute to the development of knowledge, expertise and the government service offer on the following topics:

- 1) responsible digital technology
- 2) sustainable funding
- 3) the skills and jobs needed for the green economy and the climate
- 4) the circular economy
- 5) revision of its system of sustainable development indicators.

- **Action 3** – Identify avenues for advancing the integration of sustainable development in Héma-Québec's operations and activities.

Progress in moving forward with sustainable development is one of the critical challenges that Héma-Québec is striving to achieve. Avenues for advancing the comprehensive integration of sustainable development in the organization's various spheres of activity will be identified and will lead to the production of a 2023-2028 five-year PADD that will aim to achieve the concrete and sustained objectives identified each year.

Actions were deployed in 2022-2023 to meet the known orientations contained in the coming 2023-2028 government strategy on sustainable development (SGDD), specific targets of which must be integrated into Héma-Québec's 2023-2028 PADD:

- Provide, at March 31, 2023, the proportion of responsible acquisitions (procurement contracts) made in the 12 preceding months. Prioritizing responsible acquisitions is in accordance with 2015-2020 SGDD orientations and the strategy *Priorité à l'achat québécois : l'État donne l'exemple* (Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor, 2022).
- Determine the proportion of government actions defined as structural that have been the subject of a sustainability assessment in the 12 preceding months. Entities subject to the *Sustainable Development Act* are legally required to take into account sustainable development principles when framing their actions (section 6, SDA).

## RESULTS RELATIVE TO THE 2022-2023 SUSTAINABLE ACTION PLAN

Organizational objective	In line with 2021-2022 government priorities	Action	Indicator	Target at March 31, 2023	Results and summary of the activities carried out during the year
1.1 Strengthen consideration of sustainable development principles	Sustainability assessment of government actions	1. Measure the level of integration of sustainable development at Héma-Québec, compared with the BNQ 21000 reference standard	1.1 Percentage of work completed	100%	<p>We were able to establish our sustainable development maturity level using the BNQ 21000 reference standard. On a scale of 1 to 5, which measures the maturity level, Héma-Québec is at 1.5, meaning that it has begun considering sustainable development in its activities. The organization is at the stage of establishing bases that will serve to integrate sustainable development practices in some of its activities and of viewing sustainable development as a unifying and promising project. Its mission is part of sustainable development (3rd sustainable development goal of the UN – Good Health and Well-Being) and is thus an important asset upon which it can build the foundations of its sustainable development.</p> <p><b>The target of 100% has been reached.</b></p>
		2. Raise awareness among employees of the integration of sustainable development in their practices	2.1 Proportion of employees who were made aware of the integration of sustainable development in their practices	80%	<p>Héma-Québec held seven group discussions with employees who made up the Sustainable Development Committee, with the Executive Committee and with the Board of Directors. During these workshops, the diversity of perspectives held by the stakeholders involved helped identify issues specific to Héma-Québec and think about sectors that would be suitable for sustainable development, as well as possible avenues to achieve this.</p> <p><b>The target of 80% of employees made aware of sustainable development was reached.</b></p>
		3. Identify avenues to advance the integration of sustainable development in Héma-Québec's operations and activities	3.1 Percentage of work completed	100%	<p>3.1 Work done in the workshops helped identify avenues to integrate sustainable development in operations in the following areas: responsible acquisitions, residual materials, vehicle fleet, electric charging stations, digital systems, construction and renovation.</p> <p><b>The target of 100% has been reached.</b></p>
			3.2 Percentage of responsible acquisitions	N/A	<p>3.2. Our Purchasing Policy was overhauled in June 2022. Through this policy, measures were adopted to favour and encourage local purchases, as well as sustainable and eco-friendly initiatives. These measures stem from Bill 12 (the Act mainly to promote Québec-sourced and responsible procurement by public bodies, which are subject to the Act respecting contracting by public bodies). To date, the data used to establish the percentage of responsible acquisitions continues to be collected manually.</p>
			3.3 Percentage of government actions	S.O.	<p>3.3. In the past 12 months, none of the organization's actions has corresponded to the definition of a structural government action requiring a sustainability assessment.</p>

**Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif**

Héma-Québec directors are held to the highest ethical and professional standards, thereby fostering and preserving public trust and transparency in the management of Québec’s biovigilance system.

Under the Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders, Héma-Québec directors adopted a directors’ code of ethics. It is reviewed annually by the Governance and Ethics Committee, and the directors sign a form every year attesting that they undertake to comply with it.

The directors’ declarations of interests are verified at the beginning of every board or committee meeting and included in the minutes. Furthermore, no case has ever been brought forward under the directors’ code of ethics, and no breach of conduct was reported in 2022-2023. Héma-Québec’s directors’ code of ethics can be consulted on page 74.

**Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies**

Public trust in Héma-Québec stems not only from its ability to distribute safe, high-quality biological products of human origin, but also from every action taken and decision made. The organization’s integrity is founded on sound financial management and the implementation of organizational values (integrity and honesty, respect, empowerment, and engagement).

To earn this trust and to comply with the *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*, Héma-Québec maintains a policy governing the disclosure of wrongdoings. The aim of this policy is to encourage and facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to Héma-Québec that have been or are about to be committed, while protecting whistleblowers from reprisals.

During the year, no disclosure was made, nor information communicated to the person responsible for following up disclosures.

**Politique gouvernementale relative à l’emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l’Administration**

In accordance with the *Politique gouvernementale relative à l’emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l’Administration* (policy on the use and quality of French within the government), Héma-Québec has applied and updated its linguistic policy. In addition, the standing committee chaired by the representative of the *Charter of the French Language* ensures that the Language Policy is implemented within the organization.

**Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information**

Pursuant to Division III of the *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*, Héma-Québec attests to having published the required documents and information on its website.

Access to information

In 2022-2023, six requests for access to documents held by Héma-Québec, five requests for access to personal information, and no request for corrections to personal information were received and processed within the timelines prescribed by the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information*.

PROCESSING OF ACCESS REQUESTS

Nature of the request	Processing time		Decision rendered	
Administrative documents	0-20 days	4	Accepted	5
	21-30 days	1	Partially accepted	1*
	31 days or more	1	Refused	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>
Personal information	0-20 days	3	Accepted	5
	21-30 days	1	Partially accepted	0
	31 days or more	1	Refused	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>
Corrections	0-20 days	0	Accepted	0
	21-30 days	0	Partially accepted	0
	31 days or more	0	Refused	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>
Total number of access requests subjected to reasonable accommodation measures				0
Number of review notices received from the Commission d’accès à l’information				0

\* Provision of the act justifying the decision rendered: 32.

Information Security Committee

The Information Security Committee (ISC) provides support for information security management and coordination activities, specifically by monitoring the measures put in place to ensure the integrity, security and confidentiality of the information collected and held by Héma-Québec. In accordance with the *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*, the individuals in charge of information security and access to information sit on the committee.

During the year, Héma-Québec updated this committee’s mandate to position it at a more strategic level and oversaw the integration of information security requirements in its projects. The committee tasked by the CSI to raise awareness about information security also deployed awareness campaigns and regularly conducted phishing tests.

### Policy for the funding of public services

This section highlights information pertaining to Héma-Québec's fees to which the Policy for the funding of public services applies. Billing to parties other than Québec hospitals represents approximately 0.52% of the organization's total budget.

As a non-profit organization, Héma-Québec targets a funding level of 100%. This showed a slight deficit for billing, other than billing to hospitals. The difference of 50%, or \$830,000, is not significant relative to Héma-Québec's total billing of \$481 M.

Héma-Québec's fees are reviewed on April 1 of each year and indexed based on budgeted costs and volumes. Fees are set for each sector.

#### Labile products

Héma-Québec uses an activity-based accounting model to determine production and distribution costs, which are used to set fees (total cost) for each labile product. These costs are presented to

the CAG (Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales), the agency designated by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux to manage pooled procurement, and approved by the CAG.

#### Stable products

Héma-Québec uses full cost plus pricing to set the fees for stable products charged to a third party other than Québec hospitals to cushion itself against a potential increase in costs.

Héma-Québec acts as the distributor of these products. It purchases the products through calls for tenders and manages the reserve. Several suppliers are located in the United States; as such, Héma-Québec's purchases are subject to fluctuations in the exchange rates.

#### Innovative products (human tissues and stem cells)

For other activity sectors, the fees are mainly determined on a market-oriented basis since Héma-Québec does not have exclusive rights to distribute these products in Québec.

Billing other than Québec hospitals	Revenues	Costs	Funding level achieved
Labile and stable product sectors	\$977,047	\$786,005	124.3%
Innovative product sectors (human tissues and stem cells)	\$1,352,370	\$1,352,370	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,329,417</b>	<b>\$2,138,375</b>	<b>108.9%</b>

### Act respecting contracting by public bodies

In an effort to strengthen the transparency of the contract management process and to inform the public about the measures being applied to ensure this, the organization publishes its Purchasing Policy and contract conditions on its website and reports on these to its board of directors annually.

A series of measures dealing with the application of rules of ethics and conduct in the management of contracts by employees, the handling of complaints, and accountability are based on principles of accessibility, integrity, transparency and imputability that form the underpinnings of the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*. This Act reinforces the accountability of senior executives of public bodies and fosters the sound management of public funds.

The Act mainly to promote Québec-sourced and responsible procurement by public bodies, to reinforce the integrity regime of enterprises and to increase the powers of the *Autorité des marchés publics*, authorized by the National Assembly on June 2, 2022, amended Héma-Québec's status under the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies* as of this date. Héma-Québec remains subject, nevertheless, to the provisions of this Act for certain contracts that applied to it prior to this date.

For the reference period, our reporting obligations were aimed solely at those contracts whose tendering or awarding process or execution was under way at June 1, 2022.

In accordance with the above, 18 authorization files were submitted to the SCT (Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor). Moreover, there was \$49M in procurement expenditures subject to the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*, including a total of 30 contracts valued at over \$25,000.

It should be noted that, during this reference period, a major call for tenders was authorized for the MRP system upgrade used in all our operations, valued at \$40M.

### Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises

The *Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises* was adopted by the National Assembly in December 2014 to strengthen the mechanisms for managing and controlling the workforce of public bodies. Héma-Québec confirms that it has complied with the provisions of the Act that apply to it. In accordance with the prescribed terms and conditions, the organization communicated the required information about service contracts authorized by the president and CEO to the Conseil du trésor.

The organization also periodically informed the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux about its staffing level, providing a breakdown by job category, in accordance with the terms and conditions determined by the Conseil du trésor.

The target set by Héma-Québec for 2022-2023 is the same as that of 2021-2022, representing the observable paid hours at March 31, 2023.

For fiscal 2022-2023, we carried forward a volume of hours above the target, i.e., 92,466 hours. This increase is the result of additional hours needed to deploy Héma-Québec's upgrading initiatives, as well as the return to normal operations following COVID-19.

STAFF BREAKDOWN BY PAID HOURS  
FOR THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1, 2022, TO MARCH 31, 2023

Category	Hours worked	Overtime hours	Total paid hours	Full-time equivalent	Number of employees at March 31
 Managerial staff	402,944	191	403,315	222	229
 Professional staff	670,111	4,625	674,736	371	396
 Nursing staff	305,577	13,169	318,746	175	211
 Office staff, technicians and related staff	1,131,626	51,064	1,182,691	650	766
 Labourers, maintenance and service staff	112,701	17,158	129,859	71	61
 Students and interns	7,422	5	7,426	4	14
<b>TOTAL 2022-2023</b>	<b>2,630,381</b>	<b>86,212</b>	<b>2,716,593</b>	<b>1,493</b>	<b>1,677</b>
<b>TOTAL 2021-2022</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,579,187</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>1,551</b>

### Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises

In compliance with the requirements of the Québec government *Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises*, Héma-Québec substantially upgraded many critical elements of its technology assets, in particular the updating of its blood management software package, the upgrading of its quality management system, the enhancement of its call centre technology, and the upgrading of its mobile blood drive equipment.

The updating of its main computer platforms also reached a major milestone during fiscal 2022-2023 with the start of the first upgrade to the organization's integrated management software package (PGI).

In addition to updates to the necessary technology, it should be noted that achieving Héma-Québec's strategic plan objectives requires the implementation of several dozen computer projects in support of the orientations, be it updating the foundations, enhancing the donor and employee experience, or increasing plasma self-sufficiency.

To complete all these projects, Héma-Québec continues to expand its IT teams and accelerate its shift to cloud computing. Most of the systems that have been deployed or upgraded are using these new technologies.

### Security of operations and IT assets

Héma-Québec has begun implementing its six-step strategy aimed at reinforcing the management of information security:

1. Annual review of the governance and risk management plan regarding cybersecurity and adaptation to new operational threats and realities;
2. Increased robustness of current assets, ensuring constant updating and eliminating obsolete systems;
3. Reinforcing controls and monitoring assets and the extended network perimeter;
4. Integration and regular review of identity and access controls;
5. Operation of response and backup plans. Sharing of information and collaboration with various government and private sector partners;
6. Awareness raising among users aimed at developing their reflexes to better detect threats and avoid falling into hacking traps.

The cybersecurity team continues to expand with the addition of international resources and enhanced internal and external partnerships, among others. A cybersecurity roadmap has been developed based on the organization's security posture and main threats to determine the priority projects to deploy in the coming five years to mitigate risks. Computer vulnerability management was strengthened, and a response plan to cybersecurity incidents was also developed jointly by the risk management teams and a specialized firm.

# DIRECTORS' CODE OF ETHICS

## Preamble

Héma-Québec's mission is to efficiently provide adequate quantities of safe, optimal blood components and substitutes, human tissues and cord blood to meet the needs of all Québecers as well as to provide and develop expertise along with specialized and innovative services and products in the fields of transfusion medicine and human tissue transplantation. This mandate is pursuant to the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee* and to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into the Blood System in Canada, headed by the Honourable Horace Krever.

Héma-Québec's directors, who are public administrators in accordance with the *Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q. M-30), are held to the highest ethical and professional standards, thereby fostering and preserving public trust and transparency in its mission.

## Code of Ethics

### 1. General provisions

#### Definitions

In this code of ethics, unless the context dictates otherwise, the terms and expressions below are used as follows:

- 1.1 "Director or member of the Board of Directors": Person appointed to the Héma-Québec Board of Directors by the government, as well as the President and Chief Executive Officer, who is an ex officio member of the Board of Directors and acts as Secretary;
- 1.2 "Conflict of interest": Any real, apparent, potential or future situation in which a director may be inclined to give preference to his or her personal interest, or the interest of a related party, to the detriment of Héma-Québec;
- 1.3 "Board": Héma-Québec's Board of Directors;

- 1.4 "Related party": Individuals related by blood, adoption or marriage, or who have been living in a conjugal relationship for at least one year, as well as any organization, partnership or other entity in which the director or his/her friends and family may have a controlling interest.

#### Application and interpretation

- 1.5 This code of ethics applies to Héma-Québec's directors.
- 1.6 The code of ethics is not a substitute for any statutory, regulatory or ethical provision applicable to Héma-Québec directors, including those set out in the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*.  
  
Where such provisions differ, Héma-Québec directors shall abide by the more stringent provision. Moreover, in case of doubt, they must act in the spirit of the principles described in the provisions.
- 1.7 The code of ethics in no way rules out the drafting of additional guidelines or rules pertaining to certain more specific sectors of activity or situations.

### 2. Management duties

- 2.1 Directors are appointed to contribute to the fulfillment of Héma-Québec's mission as part of their mandate. In carrying out their duties, they must adhere to the obligations imposed upon them by the laws, the constitution and the rules and regulations and act within the limits of the power conferred upon them.
- 2.2 The director must perform his/her duties with care and reserve:
  - 2.2.1 The director must be rigorous and independent, and act in the best interests of Héma-Québec.
  - 2.2.2 The behaviour of a director must be impartial.
  - 2.2.3 The director must act within the limits of his/her mandate.
  - 2.2.4 The director must be courteous and his/her relationships must be characterized by good faith so as to maintain the trust and consideration required by his/her role.

- 2.2.5 The director must not in any way participate in illicit activities.

- 2.2.6 In the carrying out of his/her duties and responsibilities, the director must make decisions without regard for any partisan political consideration. Moreover, he/she must demonstrate restraint in the public expression of personal opinions in matters directly concerning the activities of Héma-Québec and in which the Board of Directors has been involved.

- 2.3 The director must act with honesty, loyalty and solidarity:

- 2.3.1 The director must act with integrity and impartiality in the best interests of Héma-Québec.

- 2.3.2 The director must actively take part in the development and implementation of the general directions of Héma-Québec, which in no way precludes his or her right to dissent.

- 2.3.3 The director must be loyal and upstanding to his/her colleagues and honest in his/her dealings with them.

- 2.3.4 The director must dissociate the fulfillment of his/her duties from the promotion or exercise of his/her professional or business activities, save for the President and Chief Executive Officer, who is at the exclusive service of Héma-Québec.

- 2.4 The director must act with skill, diligence and efficiency:

- 2.4.1 The director must exercise his/her skills and abilities, demonstrating diligence and effectiveness in carrying out his/her mandate. He/she must also demonstrate independent professional judgment.

- 2.4.2 The director is responsible and accountable for all his/her actions taken in the performance of his/her duties.

- 2.4.3 The director must make informed decisions, taking into account any necessary expertise if need be and considering each file in its entirety.

- 2.4.4 All members of the Board of Directors must actively participate in the Board's work and attend meetings regularly. They must also be assiduous when taking part in Board committees.
- 2.4.5 The director must show discernment in the courses of action and choices he/she favors.
- 2.5 The director must act according to the rules of confidentiality:
- 2.5.1 The director must respect the confidential nature of any information that comes to his/her attention in the course of his/her duties or by virtue of his/her position.
- The first subparagraph is not intended to restrict necessary communications between Board members.
- 2.5.2 The director must not use confidential information that comes to his/her attention during the course of his/her duties for the purpose of obtaining a direct or indirect advantage, now or in the future, for him/herself or a related party.

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### 3. Conflicts of interest

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#### *General provisions*

- 3.1 The director must at all times maintain a high level of independence and avoid any situation in which there could be a personal advantage, direct or indirect, either now or in the future, which could jeopardize his/her independence, integrity or impartiality.
- 3.2 The director must prevent any conflict of interest or appearance thereof and avoid putting him/herself in a position that could ultimately prevent him/her from fulfilling his/her duties.
- 3.3 The director must avoid any situation which could compromise his/her capacity to fulfill his/her duties in an impartial, objective, professional and independent manner.

- 3.4 The director shall not commingle the assets of Héma-Québec with his/her own; he/she shall not use the assets of Héma-Québec for his/her personal gain or the gain of a related party.
- 3.5 The director may not use Héma-Québec's services or information for his/her personal benefit or for the benefit of a related party.
- 3.6 The director may not exercise his/her duties in his own interest or in the interest of a related party.
- 3.7 The director must not accept a current or future advantage from anyone if he/she has knowledge, evidence or reason to believe that this current or future advantage is granted to him/her for the purpose of influencing his/her decision.
- 3.8 The director shall not make a commitment to a third or related party nor grant that party any guarantee with regard to a vote he/she may be required to cast or to any decision whatsoever that may be made by the Board of Directors.
- 3.9 The director must avoid any situation in which he/she could be in a conflict of interest. Without limiting the scope of the foregoing, the director:
- 3.9.1 Is in a conflict of interest when the interests in question are such that he/she may be brought to show preference for some of them to the detriment of Héma-Québec, or where his/her judgment and loyalty could be negatively affected.
- 3.9.2 Is not independent from a given decision if there is a personal advantage or advantage to a related party, now or in the future, as described in article 3.1.

#### *Preventive measures*

- 3.10 At the start of each meeting, the director must declare any existing conflict of interest to the Chair and ensure the disclosure is recorded in the minutes.
- 3.11 The President and Chief Executive Officer may not, under penalty of dismissal, have a direct or indirect interest in a corporate body, partnership or other entity which could lead to a conflict of interest between him/herself and Héma-Québec. However, dismissal shall not be invoked if the interest is devolved upon the President and Chief

Executive Officer by succession or gift, provided he/she renounces it or disposes of it promptly.

Any other director having a direct or indirect interest in a corporate body, partnership, or other entity which could lead to a conflict of interest between him/herself and Héma-Québec must, under penalty of dismissal, declare this interest in writing to the Chair of the Board and, if need be, abstain from participating in any deliberation or decision related to said corporate body, partnership or other entity in which he/she has an interest. The director must also withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the deliberations and vote concerning the matter.

#### 3.12 The director must demonstrate impartiality:

- 3.12.1 The director shall not solicit, accept or demand any gift, favor, other advantage or consideration, for him/herself or a related party, either directly or indirectly, now or in the future, which could compromise his/her independence, integrity or impartiality; such is the case of gifts, favors, advantages or considerations other than what is customary and of modest value.
- 3.12.2 The director must not award, offer to award or promise to award to a third party a gift, favor or other advantage or consideration that could compromise his/her independence, integrity or impartiality.

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### 4. Political activities

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- 4.1 Any director who intends to run for public office must inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 4.2 A Chair of the Board of Directors or President and Chief Executive Officer who wishes to run for public office must tender his/her resignation.

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### 5. Post-mandate measures

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- 5.1 After his/her mandate expires, the director must maintain confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any non-public data, information, debate or discussion to which he/she was privy by virtue of his/her position at Héma-Québec.

5.2 In the year following the expiration of his/her mandate, the director may not participate, either on his/her own behalf or that of a third party, in a procedure, negotiation or other operation to which Héma-Québec is a party and with regard to which he/she has information that is not available to the public.

As well, the director must refrain from offering advice based on information that is not publicly available regarding Héma-Québec or another corporate body, partnership or entity with which he/she has had significant direct dealings in the course of the year preceding the conclusion of his/her mandate.

5.3 A director who has relinquished his/her duties must act in such a way so as not to reap undue advantage from his/her previous duties in the service of Héma-Québec.

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## 6. Responsibilities and sanctions

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6.1 Compliance with the code of ethics is an integral part of the duties and obligations of directors.

6.2 A director who observes an ethical failure, perceived or real, must inform the Chair of the Board of Directors. If this failure involves the Chair of the Board of Directors, the director must inform the Chair of the Governance Committee.

6.3 The Chair of Héma-Québec's Board of Directors or, in the cases involving him or her, the Chair of the Governance Committee, must investigate to ensure that the code of ethics is respected and applied.

6.4 A director who infringes upon any of the provisions in the code of ethics leaves him/herself open to the sanctions outlined in the Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders, in accordance with the procedure established in said regulation.

6.5 Héma-Québec's Board of Directors shall revise this code of ethics on an annual basis to ensure that it adequately reflects changes in the laws, rules, regulations and situations specific to Héma-Québec.

6.6 Each director undertakes to sign the code of ethics agreement form appended hereto at the start of his/her mandate and every year thereafter.

This code was adopted by the Board of Directors on May 7, 2014.



# GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND IN BEING RIGOROUS

Financial statements



**Patrick,**  
plasma donor

# SUMMARY

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## MANAGEMENT'S REPORT

The financial statements of Héma-Québec in this Annual Report were drawn up by Management, which is responsible for their preparation, presentation and the significant judgments and estimates included therein. This responsibility involves the selection of appropriate accounting policies that comply with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards. The financial information presented elsewhere in this Annual Report is consistent with that provided in the financial statements.

To fulfil its responsibilities, Management maintains a system of internal accounting controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and that transactions are duly approved and properly recorded on a timely basis and in a manner suitable for preparing reliable financial statements.

Héma-Québec recognizes that it is responsible for conducting its affairs in accordance with the statutes and regulations governing it.

We draw attention to note 2 to the financial statements. These financial statements, which were originally approved on June 15, 2023, have since been amended, and note 2 provides explanations for this amendment.

The Board of Directors monitors the manner in which Management carries out its financial reporting responsibilities and approves the financial statements. It is assisted in its responsibilities by the Audit Committee whose members are not part of Management. The Committee meets with Management and the Auditor General of Québec, reviews the financial statements, and recommends their approval to the Board of Directors.

The Auditor General of Québec has audited the financial statements of Héma-Québec in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Their independent auditor's report states the nature and scope of the audit and expresses their opinion.

The Auditor General of Québec has full and unrestricted access to the Audit Committee to discuss any matter related to his audit.



**Nathalie Fagnan, CPA**

President and Chief Executive Officer



**Dawn Singerman, CPA**

Vice-President, Finance and Infrastructure

Montréal, June 15, 2023, except as to note 2, which is as of September 18, 2023



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the National Assembly

### Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

#### Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of Héma-Québec (the Entity), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023, and the statement of operations and accumulated deficit, statement of remeasurement gains and losses, statement of change in net debt and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at March 31, 2023, and its results of operations, its remeasurement gains and losses, its changes in net debt and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

#### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Canada, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

#### Emphasis of Matter – Amended Financial Statements

I draw attention to note 2 to the financial statements, which describes that the financial statements that I originally reported on June 15, 2023 have been amended and describes the matter that gave rise to the amendment of the financial statements. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

### Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by the *Auditor General Act* (CQLR, chapter V-5.01), I report that, in my opinion, after giving retroactive effect to the change in the accounting policy related to asset retirement obligations, as explained in note 3, these accounting standards have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

The Auditor General of Québec,

**Guylaine Leclerc, FCPA auditor**

Montréal

June 15, 2023, except as to note 2, which is as of September 18, 2023

**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND ACCUMULATED DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023 (in thousands of dollars)**

	2023 BUDGET	2023 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL RESTATED (note 3)
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Blood products (note 5)	450,895	407,711	370,283
Grants from the Gouvernement du Québec (note 11)	79,149	52,583	55,208
Innovative products	11,192	12,653	11,403
Interest	99	1,765	118
SIIATH expertise	2,154	1,588	1,684
Other	4,640	4,801	4,219
	<b>548,129</b>	<b>481,101</b>	<b>442,915</b>
<b>EXPENSES (notes 2 and 6)</b>			
Stable products	347,104	282,412	259,802
Labile products	154,574	150,291	126,470
Innovative products	43,634	43,823	42,678
SIIATH expertise	2,154	1,586	1,684
Expenses related to COVID	663	1,730	6,529
	<b>548,129</b>	<b>479,842</b>	<b>437,163</b>
<b>ANNUAL OPERATING SURPLUS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,259</b>	<b>5,752</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED OPERATING DEFICIT, BEGINNING OF YEAR, PREVIOUSLY REPORTED</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(18,693)</b>	<b>(24,517)</b>
<b>ACCOUNTING CHANGE (note 3)</b>		<b>(1,091)</b>	<b>(1,019)</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED OPERATING DEFICIT, BEGINNING OF YEAR, RESTATED</b>		<b>(19,784)</b>	<b>(25,536)</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED OPERATING DEFICIT, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(18,525)</b>	<b>(19,784)</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF REMEASUREMENT GAINS AND LOSSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023 (in thousands of dollars)**

	2023	2022
<b>ACCUMULATED REMEASUREMENT LOSSES, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>(2,104)</b>	<b>(11,140)</b>
<b>Unrealized (losses) gains attributable to:</b>		
Derivatives	(1,265)	(2,928)
Exchange rates	(8)	27
<b>Amount reclassified to operating surplus (deficit)</b>		
Derivatives	10,737	11,985
Exchange rates	(27)	(48)
<b>Net remeasurement gains for the year</b>	<b>9,437</b>	<b>9,036</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED REMEASUREMENT GAINS (LOSSES), END OF YEAR</b>	<b>7,333</b>	<b>(2,104)</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2023 (in thousands of dollars)**

	2023	2022 RESTATED (note 3)
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Cash	14,358	52,740
Accounts receivable (note 8)	11,768	6,750
Inventories held for sale (notes 2 and 9)	126,474	133,067
Derivatives	7,341	-
	<b>159,941</b>	<b>192,557</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Line of credit (note 12)	55,063	53,310
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 10)	51,776	47,394
Grants transferable to the Gouvernement du Québec (note 11)	11,911	7,860
Non-interest bearing advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	54,706	99,651
Debt (note 13)	32,520	29,124
Employee future benefit liability (note 14)	12,924	13,021
Derivatives	-	2,131
Asset retirement obligations (note 15)	1,260	1,215
	<b>220,160</b>	<b>253,706</b>
<b>NET DEBT</b>	<b>(60,219)</b>	<b>(61,149)</b>
<b>NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Tangible capital assets (note 16)	38,697	30,367
Prepaid expenses	5,448	3,938
Supply inventories	4,882	4,956
	<b>49,027</b>	<b>39,261</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED DEFICIT</b>	<b>(11,192)</b>	<b>(21,888)</b>
Accumulated annual operating deficit	(18,525)	(19,784)
Accumulated remeasurement gains (losses)	7,333	(2,104)
	<b>(11,192)</b>	<b>(21,888)</b>

**Contractual commitments** (note 18)

**Contingencies** (note 19)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,



Anne Bourhis

Chair of the Board of the Directors



Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine

Interim Chair of the Audit Committee

**STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN NET DEBT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023**  
 (in thousands of dollars)

	2023 BUDGET	2023 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL RESTATED (note 3)
<b>ANNUAL OPERATING SURPLUS</b>		<b>1,259</b>	<b>5,752</b>
<b>Changes due to tangible capital assets:</b>			
Additions	(22,823)	(14,844)	(4,324)
Amortization for the year	6,777	6,435	6,798
Loss on disposal and write-off	-	63	193
Remeasurement of asset retirement obligations	-	16	-
	<b>(16,046)</b>	<b>(8,330)</b>	<b>2,667</b>
<b>Changes due to other non-financial assets:</b>			
Acquisition of prepaid expenses		(8,586)	(6,093)
Use of prepaid expenses		7,076	5,312
Acquisition of supply inventories		(18,484)	(17,898)
Use of supply inventories		18,558	18,978
		<b>(1,436)</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Net remeasurement gains for the year</b>		<b>9,437</b>	<b>9,036</b>
<b>Decrease (increase) in net debt</b>	<b>(16,046)</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>17,754</b>
<b>NET DEBT, BEGINNING OF YEAR, PREVIOUSLY REPORTED</b>	(61,149)	(59,934)	(77,746)
<b>Accounting change (note 3)</b>		(1,215)	(1,157)
<b>NET DEBT, BEGINNING OF YEAR, RESTATED</b>		(61,149)	(78,903)
<b>NET DEBT, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>(77,195)</b>	<b>(60,219)</b>	<b>(61,149)</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023**  
 (in thousands of dollars)

	2023	2022 RESTATED (note 3)
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Annual operating surplus</b>	1,259	5,752
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	6,435	6,798
Effective rate debt adjustment	(13)	21
Loss on disposal and write-off of tangible capital assets	63	193
Accretion expense - Asset retirement obligations	61	58
Unrealized foreign exchange gain on cash and non-cash working capital items denominated in foreign currencies	(35)	(21)
	<b>7,770</b>	<b>12,801</b>
Changes in assets and liabilities related to operating activities		
Accounts receivable	(5,018)	1,952
Inventories held for sale	6,593	(21,618)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	3,014	(3,711)
Grants transferable to the Gouvernement du Québec	4,051	12,348
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	(44,945)	50,677
Employee future benefit liability	(97)	179
Prepaid expenses	(1,510)	(781)
Supply inventories	74	1,080
<b>Cash flows related to operating activities</b>	<b>(30,068)</b>	<b>52,927</b>
<b>CAPITAL ACTIVITIES</b>		
Additions to tangible capital assets	(13,476)	(3,436)
<b>Cash flows related to capital activities</b>	<b>(13,476)</b>	<b>(3,436)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Line of credit	1,753	(9,794)
Increase in debt	12,540	4,275
Debt repayment	(9,131)	(8,366)
<b>Cash flows related to financing activities</b>	<b>5,162</b>	<b>(13,885)</b>
<b>CHANGE IN CASH</b>	<b>(38,382)</b>	<b>35,606</b>
<b>CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	52,740	17,134
<b>CASH, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>14,358</b>	<b>52,740</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>		
Interest paid	578	798
Interest received	1,686	107
Additions to tangible capital assets funded by accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,938	1,570

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

## 1. INCORPORATION AND NATURE OF OPERATIONS

Héma-Québec, constituted on March 26, 1998 by letters patent issued under Part III of the *Companies Act* (CQLR, chapter C-38), is continued in accordance with the provisions of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee* (CQLR, chapter H-1.1). Héma-Québec's mission is to efficiently meet the needs of the Québec population for quality blood and other biological products of human origin. Héma-Québec operates in a regulated environment in compliance with the requirements of the *Food and Drugs Act* (R.S.C. 1985, c. F-27) and its related regulations. To fulfil its mission, Héma-Québec also meets the requirements and regulations of several Canadian and international standards. Under the *Income Tax Act* (R.S.C. 1985, c. 1 (5<sup>th</sup> Supp.)) and the *Taxation Act* (CQLR, chapter 1-3), Héma-Québec is not subject to income taxes.

## 2. AMENDED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Subsequently to the publication of its financial statements on June 15, 2023, Héma-Québec amended the recognition of inventories held for sale and the related expense following the discovery of an inaccuracy in the reports of inventory held by a treatment process subcontractor. These reports were used to validate the quantities of plasma for fractionation in inventory presented in note 9 "Inventories held for sale" of the financial statements.

For the year ended March 31, 2023, this amendment resulted in a \$19.3 million increase in expenses related to stable products, a \$19.3 million decrease in inventories held for sale and a decrease of the same amount in accumulated surplus, now an accumulated deficit, following the amendment.

## 3. ACCOUNTING CHANGE

### Adoption of a new accounting standard

#### PS 3280, *Asset retirement obligations*

On April 1, 2022, Héma-Québec adopted Section PS 3280, *Asset Retirement Obligations*. This section establishes standards on how to account for, measure and report a liability for asset retirement obligations, whether the asset is in productive use or not. It also establishes the disclosure requirements for a such liability.

This standard was applied on a modified retroactive basis, that is:

- The provisions of the standard were applied to events and transactions from the date of origin of the asset retirement obligations. In the case of buildings with asbestos, the standard was applied as of 1999. For irradiators, it was applied as of 1998 and 2008.
- The assumptions and discount rates used were established on April 1, 2022, the initial application date of the standard.

The application of this new standard resulted in an increase (decrease) in the following items in the statement of financial position, the statement of operations and accumulated deficit, and the statement of change in net debt for the year ended March 31, 2022:

	\$
<b>Statement of financial position</b>	
Liabilities	
Asset retirement obligations	1,215
Net debt	1,215
Non-financial assets	
Tangible capital assets	124
Accumulated deficit	1,091

	\$
<b>Statement of operations and accumulated deficit</b>	
Accumulated deficit, beginning of year	1,019
Expenses	
Amortization of tangible capital assets	14
Accretion expense - Asset retirement obligations	58
Annual operating surplus	(72)
Accumulated deficit, end of year	1,091
<b>Statement of change in net debt</b>	
Net debt, beginning of year	1,157
Annual operating surplus	(72)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	14
Net debt, end of year	1,215

## 4. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of accounting

For purposes of preparing its financial statements, Héma-Québec mainly uses the *CPA Canada Handbook – Public Sector Accounting*. The use of any other source in the application of accounting policies must be consistent with the latter.

### Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements of Héma-Québec in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards requires Management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the recognition of revenues and expenses for the financial statement reporting period. The main estimates consist of the useful life of capital assets, the liability associated with asset retirement obligations, the valuation of inventories held for sale, the allowance for pay relativity and new pay increases and the employee future benefit liability. Actual results could differ from Management's best estimates.

### Measurement uncertainty

The liability associated with asset retirement obligations is subject to measurement uncertainty and may vary due to the constantly evolving technologies used in asset retirement activities and to differences between the assumptions used for measuring the liability and the actual results. The main assumptions made include the estimate of current retirement costs, the inflation rate of costs, the remaining discount period and the discount rate. In addition, the requirement to safely dispose of the asbestos in the buildings is subject to measurement uncertainty due to the inherent limits of measuring quantities of asbestos present and because the work timeline is unknown when no building retirements are planned.

### Financial instruments

Financial instruments comprise financial assets and liabilities, as well as derivatives. Their measurement depends on their classification, as described below.

Cash	Cost
Trade and other receivables, and discounts receivable	Cost
Line of credit	Cost
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	Cost
Grants transferable to the Gouvernement du Québec	Cost
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	Cost
Derivatives	Fair value
Debt and accrued interest payable	Amortized cost using the effective interest method

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

#### 4. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONT'D)

##### Financial instruments (cont'd)

Héma-Québec uses derivative financial instruments to manage currency risk. Unrealized gains and losses on foreign exchange contracts are recognized until the settlement period in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses, and upon settlement, the accumulated balance of remeasurement gains or losses is reclassified as a foreign exchange gain or loss under expenses in the statement of operations and accumulated deficit.

##### Fair value hierarchy

Financial instruments recorded at fair value are classified using a fair value hierarchy that reflects the significance of the inputs used in making the measurements. The fair value hierarchy requires the use of observable market data whenever available.

The fair value hierarchy has the following levels:

*Level 1:* The fair value of the instrument is determined using quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

*Level 2:* The fair value of the instrument is determined using inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable either directly (i.e., as prices) or indirectly (i.e., derived from prices).

*Level 3:* The fair value of the instrument is determined using inputs that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

Derivative financial instruments are classified within Level 2 of the fair value hierarchy (the fair value of derivatives is based on inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e., as prices) or indirectly (i.e., derived from prices)).

##### REVENUES

Revenues are accounted for on an accrual basis. Revenues resulting from the sale of products are recognized once all the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to clients, while revenues from services are recognized as the services are rendered.

Revenues derived from Gouvernement du Québec grants are recognized in the period where events giving rise to such revenues occurred, provided the grants are authorized and all eligibility criteria, if any, are met.

##### EXPENSES

##### Employee benefit plans

Héma-Québec offers its employees defined benefit pension plans. Contributions are made by both Héma-Québec and plan members. Certain employees also have defined contribution plans. In addition, Héma-Québec provides its employees with certain post-employment benefits reported under "other plans," while providing certain retirees with health and life insurance benefits.

The cost of retirement benefits for the period is actuarially determined using the projected benefit method prorated on service. The cost of retirement benefits is measured using net current period benefit cost, amortization of actuarial gains and losses, and employee future benefit obligation interest expense, less the expected return on plan assets. Plan amendments give rise to a past service cost, which is recognized as an expense in the year of the amendments, net of the unamortized balance of discounted gains or losses, if any.

Employee future benefit obligations are actuarially determined using the projected benefit method prorated on services and Management's best estimates as to the expected rate return on plan investments, inflation rate, discount rate, rate of compensation increase, employee retirement ages and assumed health care cost trends. Assets and expected return on plan assets are valued using a five-year smoothed market value method.

Actuarial gains or losses arise from, in particular, the difference between the actual return on plan assets and the expected return on plan assets, as well as the difference between plan experience and the actuarial assumptions used to determine the employee future benefit obligation, as well as changes to these assumptions. Actuarial gains and losses are amortized over the average expected remaining service life of participating employees.

A valuation allowance is recorded for any excess of the adjusted value of the accrued benefit asset (that is, the value of the accrued benefit asset less unamortized net actuarial losses) over the expected future benefit (that is, any withdrawable surplus or reduction in future contributions).

An employee future benefit asset or liability is presented in the statement of financial position to reflect the difference at year-end between the value of employee future benefit obligations and the value of plan assets, net of unamortized actuarial gains and losses and valuation allowance.

##### FINANCIAL ASSETS

##### Cash

Héma-Québec's policy consists in presenting, in the cash line item, bank balances, including bank overdrafts whose balances fluctuate from being positive to overdrawn and are used to make up for cash deficiencies when they are held by the same institution.

##### Inventories held for sale

Inventories held for sale, consisting of stocks of blood products (labile and stable) and innovative products (cord blood and human tissues), are measured at the lower of cost and net recoverable amount, with cost determined using the average cost method. The net recoverable amount is the estimated selling price less costs to sell.

##### LIABILITIES

##### Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) annually confirms a budgetary level with Héma-Québec for the acquisition of blood products by hospitals. Héma-Québec therefore records, under Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec, the amounts received from the MSSS, which acts as a third party payor for the purchase of labile and stable products on behalf of hospitals. Any payment below the proceeds from sales of blood products to hospitals becomes an amount receivable from the government, while any payment exceeding the sales of blood products to hospitals is recovered in accordance with a timeline agreed upon between the MSSS and Héma-Québec.

##### Asset retirement obligations

An asset retirement obligation is recorded when all the following conditions are met:

- there is a legally enforceable obligation requiring Héma-Québec to carry out specific activities related to the permanent retirement of an asset that require an outflow of economic resources;
- the obligation results from the acquisition, construction, development and/or normal use of the asset;
- the specific asset retirement activities are expected to be carried out;
- the costs related to this obligation can be reasonably estimated.

The asset retirement costs are capitalized to the cost of the assets concerned and amortized on a straight-line basis from the date of the legal obligation until the expected time for carrying out asset retirement activities.

The carrying amount of the obligation is initially measured using the estimated discounted cash flows necessary to carry out the asset retirement activities. The cash flows are adjusted based on inflation and discounted using the discount rate that reflects Management's best estimate of the cost of funds needed to settle the obligation on its due date, whether it is known or estimated.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

#### 4. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONT'D)

##### LIABILITIES (CONT'D)

###### Asset retirement obligations (cont'd)

Following initial recognition, the carrying amount of the obligation is increased by the annual accretion expense to account for the passage of time. The carrying amount is also adjusted to account for changes in timing or the amount of the original estimate of undiscounted cash flows or the discount rate. These adjustments are recognized as an increase or decrease in the asset's carrying amount. The revised carrying amount of the asset is amortized on a go-forward basis.

##### NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

By their nature, the non-financial assets of Héma-Québec are normally used to provide future services.

###### Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, which consists of expenses directly attributable to their acquisition and related retirement costs, if applicable. Amortization is calculated on a straight-line basis over their useful lives commencing on the date they are ready for commissioning, using the following periods:

Building, betterment to building and other	between 10 and 40 years <sup>1</sup>
Machinery and automotive equipment	5 and 10 years <sup>2</sup>
Office furniture and equipment	5 and 10 years
Computer hardware and software	3 years
Systems development	5 and 7 years

<sup>1</sup> The asset retirement costs capitalized in the buildings category are amortized over a period of 63 years..

<sup>2</sup> The asset retirement costs capitalized in the machinery and automotive equipment category are amortized over a period of 27 to 30 years.

Land and tangible capital assets under construction or development are not amortized.

When conditions indicate that a tangible capital asset no longer contributes to Héma-Québec's ability to provide goods and services, or that the value of future economic benefits associated with the tangible capital asset is less than its net book value, the cost of the tangible capital asset is reduced to reflect the decline in the asset's value. Write-downs are accounted for as expenses for the year in the statement of operations and accumulated deficit and are not subsequently reversed.

##### FOREIGN CURRENCY TRANSLATION

Foreign currency transactions are accounted for at the average monthly exchange rate. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currency are translated at the exchange rate in effect on the statement of financial position date, whereas non-monetary items are translated at the historical average monthly exchange rate. Exchange rate fluctuations give rise to foreign exchange gains or losses that are recognized until the settlement period in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses and, upon settlement, the accumulated balance of remeasurement gains or losses is reclassified as a foreign exchange gain or loss under expenses in the statement of operations and accumulated deficit.

##### INTER-ENTITY TRANSACTIONS

Inter-entity transactions are transactions entered into between entities controlled or subject to joint control by the Gouvernement du Québec.

Assets received for no consideration from a Gouvernement du Québec reporting entity are recognized at their carrying amount. Services received at no cost are not recognized. The other inter-entity transactions were carried out at the exchange amount, which is the amount of the consideration agreed for the item transferred or service provided.

#### 5. BLOOD PRODUCTS

The budgeted prices for all blood products are submitted every year to the Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales (CAG), which is the joint procurement group designated by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux under Division VI of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*. Following consultations with the Blood System Procurement and Financing Management Committee (PFMC), the budgeted prices are confirmed by CAG. The PFMC is an advisory committee to the Direction de la biovigilance, which falls under the purview of the Direction générale des services de santé et médecine universitaire. The PFMC's role is to make recommendations on financial and accounting issues relating to the supply of blood products.

#### 6. EXPENSES

						2023	2022 RESTATED (note 3)
	STABLE PRODUCTS	LABILE PRODUCTS	INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS <sup>1</sup>	SIATH EXPERTISE <sup>2</sup>	COVID	TOTAL	TOTAL
Stable products	250,835	-	-	-	-	250,835	212,038
Salaries and benefits	6,792	124,168	14,017	1,423	387	146,787	127,952
Blood drives	1,815	15,591	314	-	-	17,720	17,496
Medical supplies	98	11,399	5,069	-	136	16,702	17,200
Purchased services	19,655	(21,788)	15,927	151	1,136	15,081	13,284
Buildings and premises	91	12,686	403	-	20	13,200	11,935
Purchase of cord blood, stem cells, labile products and human tissues	-	-	7 100	-	-	7,100	6,099
Freight and shipping	62	6,144	772	-	5	6,983	6,284
Amortization of tangible capital assets	654	5,368	371	5	37	6,435	6,798
Advertising and public relations	20	5,933	44	-	-	5,997	4,929
Information technology	5	5,825	-	4	-	5,834	4,305
Other expenses	80	4,627	441	3	9	5,160	5,057
Insurance	-	1,363	-	-	-	1,363	1,160
Other interest and bank charges	-	779	-	-	-	779	266
Interest on long-term debt	-	588	-	-	-	588	584
Loss on disposal and write-off of tangible capital assets	-	63	-	-	-	63	193
Accretion expense - Asset retirement obligations	-	61	-	-	-	61	58
Foreign exchange gain (loss)	(10,844)	(142)	(329)	-	-	(11,315)	11,748
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>269,263</b>	<b>172,665</b>	<b>44,129</b>	<b>1,586</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>489,373</b>	<b>447,386</b>
Plasma for fractionation <sup>3</sup>	21,311	(21,311)	-	-	-	-	-
Change in inventories <sup>4</sup> (note 2)	(8,162)	(1,063)	(306)	-	-	(9,531)	(10,223)
<b>Total</b>	<b>282,412</b>	<b>150,291</b>	<b>43,823</b>	<b>1,586</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>479,842</b>	<b>437,163</b>

<sup>1</sup> Innovative products comprise the following activity sectors: stem cells, human tissues and mother's milk and reference laboratory.

<sup>2</sup> SIATH expertise includes activities related to the Système d'information intégré sur les activités transfusionnelles et d'hémovigilance awarded by the MSSS.

<sup>3</sup> Some expenses related to plasma extraction are reallocated to stable products based on litres of plasma shipped to the fractionator.

<sup>4</sup> Change in inventories includes plasma for fractionation, labile products, cord blood and human tissues.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

## 7. ACCUMULATED OPERATING SURPLUS

As required by the provisions of section 25 of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*, any funding surpluses resulting from the application of prices are paid into the General Fund of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, unless a prior agreement between the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and Héma-Québec is entered into on the use of the surplus.

## 8. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

	2023	2022
Trade accounts receivable	3,191	2,716
Commodity taxes	2,616	2,623
Discounts receivable	3,013	44
Other receivables	2,948	1,367
	<b>11,768</b>	<b>6,750</b>

## 9. INVENTORIES HELD FOR SALE

	2023	2022
Stable products	74,138	90,262
Plasma for fractionation	45,867	37,477
Labile products	2,843	2,008
Human tissues	1,155	1,951
Cord blood	2,471	1,369
	<b>126,474</b>	<b>133,067</b>

## 10. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2023	2022
Trade accounts payable	26,398	21,090
Salaries payable and accrued vacation	20,382	20,987
Benefits	4,026	4,433
Deferred revenues	920	844
Accrued interest payable	50	40
	<b>51,776</b>	<b>47,394</b>

## 11. GRANTS TRANSFERABLE TO THE GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC

	2023	2022
Grants transferable (grants receivable), beginning of year	7,860	(4,488)
Grants received	64,494	67,556
Grants recognized as revenue	(52,583)	(55,208)
MSSS recovery	(7,860)	-
<b>Grants transferable, end of year</b>	<b>11,911</b>	<b>7,860</b>

## 12. CREDIT FACILITIES

Héma-Québec was authorized by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux to establish a borrowing plan under section 78 of the *Financial Administration Act* (CQLR, chapter A-6.001). Under this borrowing plan, Héma-Québec may borrow over the short term or under line of credit from financial institutions or the Ministère des Finances, as manager of the Financing Fund, and over the long term from said Minister.

The authorized amount for the April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024 period is for requirements not exceeding \$133.9 million. The borrowings provided for under this plan serve primarily to fund bank overdrafts, asset acquisitions and renewals, loan renewals and the implementation of product safety improvement projects. Héma-Québec's borrowing terms comprise rates similar or equivalent to Gouvernement du Québec rates. Under this plan, Héma-Québec drew down \$55 million on its line of credit as at March 31, 2023 (\$53 million as at March 31, 2022). The interest rate for this line of credit was 4.5% as at March 31, 2023 (0.86% as at March 31, 2022).

Héma-Québec also has a \$15 million revolving line of credit with a financial institution under terms that may be changed at the bank's option. As at March 31, 2023 and 2022, this line of credit, which is repayable at any time, was undrawn. The line of credit bears interest at the bank's prime rate less 0.25%.

## 13. DEBT

	2023	2022
Borrowings from the Financing Fund repayable in monthly instalments of 684 (principal only) (597 in 2022), at fixed rates ranging from 0.73% to 4.18% (0.73% to 3.31% in 2022), maturing from 2024 to 2046	32,520	27,039
Borrowing from the Financing Fund repayable in monthly instalments of 22 in 2022 (principal only), at a fixed rate of 1.80% in 2022, repaid in 2023	-	2,085
	<b>32,520</b>	<b>29,124</b>

Assuming renewal under the same terms, principal repayments on debt over the upcoming fiscal years are as follows:

2024	7,733
2025	5,938
2026	5,139
2027	3,288
2028	2,632
2029 and thereafter	7,897

## 14. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY

Héma-Québec has several funded and unfunded defined benefit plans to ensure that pension, post-retirement and post-employment benefits are paid to most employees. Actuarial valuations of the retirement plans were carried out as at December 31, 2019. The employee future benefit obligations shown as at March 31, 2023 and retirement benefit expense for the fiscal year then ended are based on an extrapolation of the latest actuarial valuations.

The defined benefit plans are based on years of service and final average salary. They also provide for partial indexation of pension benefits based on inflation.

The actuarial valuations of the other post-retirement and post-employment benefit plans were carried out as at March 31, 2022. The employee future benefit obligations shown as at March 31, 2023 and retirement benefit expense for the fiscal year then ended are based on an extrapolation of that latest actuarial valuation.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

#### 14. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY (CONT'D)

Héma-Québec also has defined contribution plans under which the commitment is limited to the total value of the individual accounts of plan participants. No expense was recognized in these plans during the year.

Actuarial gains and losses are amortized over the expected average remaining service life of active participating employees, which is 12 years for the unionized employee pension plan, 15 years for the non-unionized employee pension plan, 6 years for the supplemental pension plan, 11 years for post-retirement benefits and 3 years for post-employment benefits.

##### CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY

	2023	2022
Pension plans	5,962	5,852
Other plans	6,962	7,169
<b>Total employee future benefit liability</b>	<b>12,924</b>	<b>13,021</b>

##### RECONCILIATION OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2023		2022	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Pension plan assets	329,244	-	313,481	-
Employee future benefit obligation	282,886	5,492	277,997	5,710
<b>Surplus (deficit) position</b>	<b>46,358</b>	<b>(5,492)</b>	<b>35,484</b>	<b>(5,710)</b>
Unamortized actuarial gains	(17,873)	(1,470)	(12,908)	(1,459)
Valuation allowance	(34,447)	-	(28,428)	-
<b>Employee future benefit liability, end of year</b>	<b>(5,962)</b>	<b>(6,962)</b>	<b>(5,852)</b>	<b>(7,169)</b>

##### EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT OBLIGATION

	2023		2022	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Employee future benefit obligation, beginning of year	277,997	5,710	269,339	6,137
Current period benefit cost	15,902	4,480	15,501	3,910
Interest expense on obligation	15,272	87	14,211	71
Benefits paid	(12,070)	(4,773)	(11,242)	(4,370)
Actuarial gain	(14,215)	(12)	(9,812)	(38)
<b>Employee future benefit obligation, end of year</b>	<b>282,886</b>	<b>5,492</b>	<b>277,997</b>	<b>5,710</b>

##### PENSION PLAN ASSETS

	2023		2022	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Pension plan assets, beginning of year	313,481	-	295,409	-
Employer contributions	10,866	-	10,298	-
Employee contributions	7,174	-	6,744	-
Expected return on plan assets	17,406	-	15,810	-
Benefits paid	(12,070)	-	(11,242)	-
Actuarial loss on assets	(7,613)	-	(3,538)	-
<b>Pension plan assets, end of year</b>	<b>329,244</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>313,481</b>	<b>-</b>

##### FAIR VALUE OF PLAN ASSETS AS AT MARCH 31

	2023		2022	
	Value	Percentage	Value	Percentage
Bonds	39,729	13%	49,925	16%
Shares	-	0%	41,857	14%
Other	272,003	87%	214,552	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>311,732</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>306,334</b>	<b>100%</b>

##### ACTUAL RETURN ON PLAN ASSETS

	2023	2022
Expected return on plan assets	17,406	15,810
Actual return on plan assets	9,793	12,272
<b>Actuarial loss on assets</b>	<b>(7,613)</b>	<b>(3,538)</b>
Actual rate of return	3,09%	4,11%

##### EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR

	2023		2022	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Current period net benefit cost	8,728	4,480	8,757	3,910
Amortization of actuarial gains	(1,637)	-	(400)	-
Change in valuation allowance	6,019	-	4,108	-
<b>Benefit expense</b>	<b>13,110</b>	<b>4,480</b>	<b>12,465</b>	<b>3,910</b>
Interest expense on obligation	15,272	87	14,211	71
Expected return on plan assets	(17,406)	-	(15,810)	-
<b>Benefit interest expense</b>	<b>(2,134)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>(1,599)</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Total benefit expense</b>	<b>10,976</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>10,866</b>	<b>3,981</b>

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

#### 14. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY (cont'd)

##### Significant assumptions

	2023		2022	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
<b>Employee future benefit obligation as at March 31</b>				
Discount rate	5.96%	3.60%	5.50%	3.10%
Rate of compensation increase	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
Inflation rate	2.00%	-	2.00%	-
<b>Benefit expense for the years ended March 31</b>				
Discount rate	5.50%	3.10%	5.30%	2.20%
Expected rate of return on plan assets	5.50%	-	5.30%	-
Rate of compensation increase	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
<b>Demographic factors</b>				
Mortality	CPM-2014 projected using improvement scale CPM-B		CPM-2014 projected using improvement scale CPM-B	

#### 15. ASSET RETIREMENT OBLIGATIONS

Héma-Québec's primary asset retirement obligation is for the removal of asbestos from the head office building. Other asset retirement obligations relate to the disposal of irradiators.

##### CHANGES IN ASSET RETIREMENT OBLIGATIONS

	2023			2022
	ASBESTOS REMOVAL	OTHER	TOTAL	TOTAL
Opening balance	959	256	1,215	1,157
Accretion expense	53	8	61	58
Revisions to estimates	-	(16)	(16)	-
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>1,215</b>

##### SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

Asbestos removal from the building represented 80.32% of the total liability associated with asset retirement obligations. The main assumptions used for these obligations are the following:

	2023			2022
	ASBESTOS REMOVAL	OTHER	TOTAL	TOTAL
Discount rate	5.54%	4.05% and 4.18%	5.54%	2.74% and 3.39%
Remaining discount period	10 years <sup>1</sup>	3 and 16 years	11 years <sup>1</sup>	4 and 17 years
Inflation rate	2.93%	From 1.96% to 6.66%	2.93%	From 1.96% to 6.66%

<sup>1</sup> The remaining discount period presented takes into account the estimated duration of the retirement activities, which are typically spread over one year.

The undiscounted estimated costs for performing the retirement activities as at March 31, 2023 and included in the measurement of the liability amounted to \$1.525 million (\$1.472 million as at March 31, 2022).

#### 16. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	2023						
	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
<b>Cost</b>							
Opening balance	2,140	53,251	32,647	4,773	12,497	17,758	123,066
Additions	-	3,174	4,207	218	2,015	5,230	14,844
Disposals and write-off	-	-	(1,675)	-	(39)	-	(1,714)
Remeasurement of asset retirement obligations	-	-	(16)	-	-	-	(16)
<b>Closing balance*</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>56,425</b>	<b>35,163</b>	<b>4,991</b>	<b>14,473</b>	<b>22,988</b>	<b>136,180</b>
<b>Accumulated amortization</b>							
Opening balance	-	37,219	25,162	4,235	10,291	15,792	92,699
Amortization for the year	-	2,700	1,701	109	1,283	642	6,435
Disposals and write-off	-	-	(1,612)	-	(39)	-	(1,651)
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>39,919</b>	<b>25,251</b>	<b>4,344</b>	<b>11,535</b>	<b>16,434</b>	<b>97,483</b>
<b>Net carrying amount</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>16,506</b>	<b>9,912</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>2,938</b>	<b>6,554</b>	<b>38,697</b>
	2022 RESTATED (note 3)						
	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
<b>Cost</b>							
Opening balance	2,140	52,642	31,864	5,159	12,132	18,028	121,965
Additions	-	1,463	1,545	20	870	426	4,324
Disposals and write-off	-	(854)	(762)	(406)	(505)	(696)	(3,223)
<b>Closing balance*</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>53,251</b>	<b>32,647</b>	<b>4,773</b>	<b>12,497</b>	<b>17,758</b>	<b>123,066</b>
<b>Accumulated amortization</b>							
Opening balance	-	35,335	24,242	4,539	9,607	15,208	88,931
Amortization for the year	-	2,638	1,653	102	1,125	1,280	6,798
Disposals and write-off	-	(754)	(733)	(406)	(441)	(696)	(3,030)
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,219</b>	<b>25,162</b>	<b>4,235</b>	<b>10,291</b>	<b>15,792</b>	<b>92,699</b>
<b>Net carrying amount</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>16,032</b>	<b>7,485</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>1,966</b>	<b>30,367</b>
	* The closing balance includes the following tangible capital assets under development:						
	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
2023	-	614	780	-	762	5,413	7,569
2022	-	1,309	304	-	68	308	1,989

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

## 17. RISK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

### Risk management

In the normal course of its operations, Héma-Québec is exposed to various financial risks, described below. Management assesses these risks and implements strategies to minimize their impact on its performance.

#### I. Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one entity's failure to discharge an obligation under a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party. Héma-Québec is exposed to credit risk resulting from the possibility that parties may default on their financial obligations, where there is a concentration of transactions with a same party or a concentration of third-party financial obligations with similar economic characteristics that would be affected in the same way by future developments. Héma-Québec's financial instruments exposed to credit risk include the following line items: cash, trade accounts receivable, discounts receivable, other receivables and derivatives.

The credit risk associated with cash is limited as the counterparty is a Canadian chartered bank which has been assigned a high credit rating by national rating agencies.

Credit risk arising from trade accounts receivable is limited as they primarily involve public bodies that are Gouvernement du Québec reporting entities. Such receivables are collectible during the following year.

Discounts receivable are amounts receivable under contractual agreements with suppliers. Credit risk is limited as these discounts receivable are provided for under the contracts and Héma-Québec has met its purchase obligations. These amounts are collectible within 60 days after the end of the fiscal year.

Other receivables include an amount receivable under a contractual agreement with a client. Credit risk is limited as this client is a Gouvernement du Québec reporting entity. This receivable is collectible during the subsequent year.

Derivative financial instruments are subject to a degree of credit risk in the event that the counterparty fails to comply with its obligations. Héma-Québec minimizes this risk by dealing with the Québec Financing Fund.

The carrying amount in the statement of financial position of Héma-Québec's financial instruments exposed to credit risk represents the maximum amount of credit risk to which the organization is exposed and totalled \$30.9 million (\$56.9 million in 2022). None of these financial instruments was impaired and Management estimates that the credit quality of all instruments which have not been impaired or are not past due is strong as at the date of the financial statements (none as at March 31, 2022).

#### II. Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that Héma-Québec will not have the necessary funds to meet a demand for cash or fund its obligations associated with financial liabilities as they come due. Liquidity risk also includes the risk that Héma-Québec will not be able to liquidate its financial assets on a timely basis at a reasonable price.

Héma-Québec actively manages its cash generated from its operations and believes it has sufficient liquidity and credit facilities to ensure the necessary funds to meet its current and long-term financial obligations at a reasonable cost, if required. Credit facilities are disclosed in note 12.

As at March 31, 2023 and 2022, the contractual maturities of the financial liabilities were as follows:

	2023			TOTAL	CARRYING VALUE
	2024	2025	2026 AND THEREAFTER		
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	46,780	-	-	46,780	46,780
Line of credit	55,063	-	-	55,063	55,063
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	54,706	-	-	54,706	54,706
Interest on debt	799	631	1,806	3,236	3,343
Debt	7,733	5,938	18,956	32,627	32,520
<b>Total non-derivative financial instruments</b>	<b>165,081</b>	<b>6,569</b>	<b>20,762</b>	<b>192,412</b>	<b>192,412</b>
	2022			TOTAL	CARRYING VALUE
	2023	2024	2025 AND THEREAFTER		
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	42,077	-	-	42,077	42,077
Line of credit	53,310	-	-	53,310	53,310
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	99,651	-	-	99,651	99,651
Interest on debt	514	392	1,189	2,095	2,189
Debt	7,031	6,025	16,162	29,218	29,124
<b>Total non-derivative financial instruments</b>	<b>202,583</b>	<b>6,417</b>	<b>17,351</b>	<b>226,351</b>	<b>226,351</b>
Derivative financial instruments	2,131	-	-	2,131	2,131
<b>Total financial instruments</b>	<b>204,714</b>	<b>6,417</b>	<b>17,351</b>	<b>228,482</b>	<b>228,482</b>

#### III. Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the market value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk is threefold, comprising interest rate risk, currency risk and other price risk.

Héma-Québec is exposed to interest rate risk and currency risk.

##### Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flow of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

Héma-Québec is exposed to the risk associated with changes in interest rates with respect to its line of credit bearing interest at a variable rate. As at March 31, 2023, if the interest rate in effect had increased or decreased by 10%, the variation in operating surplus would not have been material.

Héma-Québec's debt bears interest on a fixed rate basis. Accordingly, Héma-Québec's exposure to interest rate risk related to its cash flows is minimal, as Héma-Québec does not intend to early repay debt.

##### Currency risk

In the normal course of operations, Héma-Québec purchases its stable products primarily in U.S. dollars and is therefore exposed to fluctuations in that currency. Héma-Québec has established a currency risk management policy and enters into derivative financial instruments to manage currency risk exposures particularly through foreign exchange contracts. To manage the currency risk related to the purchase of stable products, medical supplies, blood drive supplies, stem cells, cord blood and human tissues, Héma-Québec entered into 26 foreign exchange contracts to cover 90% of its expected foreign currency requirements in an amount of US\$130 million at a rate of 1.2968 for the period from April 6, 2023 to March 21, 2024 (in 2022, 26 foreign exchange contracts for an amount of US\$182 million at a rate of 1.2613 for the period from April 7, 2022 to March 23, 2023).

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2023 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

## 17. RISK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (CONT'D)

### III. Market risk (cont'd)

#### Currency risk (cont'd)

As at March 31, 2023, unrealized gains on foreign exchange contracts in the amount of \$7.3 million were recognized in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses (unrealized losses of \$2.1 million as at March 31, 2022) and were measured based on the difference between the foreign currency contract purchase rates and the rate of 1.3533 (unadjusted) quoted in an active market for identical instruments (1.2496 as at March 31, 2022).

The statement of financial position includes the following amounts in Canadian dollars with respect to financial assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies:

	2023	2022
<b>U.S. DOLLARS</b>		
Cash	4,933	2,828
Trade accounts receivable and other receivables	594	229
Trade accounts payable	6,592	4,504
<b>EUROS</b>		
Trade accounts payable	96	39
<b>OTHER CURRENCIES</b>		
Trade accounts receivable and other receivables	3	-
Trade accounts payable	2	4

Based on the financial assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies held by Héma-Québec as at the date of the financial statements, a 3.9% change in the U.S. dollar exchange rate (3% in 2022), corresponding to market volatility in the last 12 months, would not have any material effect on the operating surplus or on the remeasurement gains and losses.

## 18. CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS

Héma-Québec has entered into long-term leases expiring at various dates over the next 15 years for its operating facilities and administrative premises. In some instances, the leases for premises include renewal options of up to 10 years. The lease expense for the premises for the year ended March 31, 2023 amounted to \$3.8 million (\$3.5 million in 2022).

Future minimum payments under long-term leases total \$26.4 million (\$29.2 million as at March 31, 2022) and are as follows:

2024	3,474
2025	2,937
2026	2,797
2027	2,443
2028	2,347
2029 and thereafter	12,395

## 19. CONTINGENCIES

Héma-Québec is exposed to various claims and legal actions in the normal course of operations. Management believes that potential outlays arising from those disputes have been sufficiently provisioned and foresees no adverse material effect on the financial position or results of Héma-Québec.

## 20. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Héma-Québec is related to all entities controlled or jointly controlled by the Gouvernement du Québec. It is also related to its key management personnel, their close relatives and to entities for which one or more of these persons have the power to determine the financial and administrative decisions. Key management personnel consist of members of the Board of Directors and Management Committee and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Héma-Québec.

Héma-Québec has entered into no significant transactions with related parties at a value different from that which would have been arrived at had the parties not been related.

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HÉMA-QUÉBEC

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**Josyv'kha,**  
blood donor