

A message from Executive Director



It is with great pleasure that I welcome the new readers of *Info HÉMA-QUÉBEC* magazine, our generous blood donors. In fact, for some of you, this is the first time you are receiving a copy of *Info HÉMA-QUÉBEC*.

This publication, in its fourth year of print, was initially intended to inform HQ personnel and healthcare partners about the implementation of HÉMA-QUÉBEC. Donors had their own publication called *Info-Donneur*.

In the aim of constantly keeping you informed, we decided to combine the two publications

into one—*Info HÉMA-QUÉBEC*. We hope this magazine will meet your expectations and need for information regarding the organization, its partners and the act of donating blood.

Do not hesitate to send us your comments and suggestions for articles. Enjoy!

Francine Décarie
Executive Director

*“Welcome
to all
our new
readers!”*

Special Blood banks

*Open 24 hours,
seven days a week,
hospital blood
banks are an
essential link in
the transfusion
chain. To help you
better understand
their role, Info
HÉMA-QUÉBEC
spoke with the
managers of
six Québec
blood banks.*

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Info Donneur and
Info HÉMA-QUÉBEC are

merging!

Interview with Ernest Lochou

Career donor

"It is important to set goals."

When Ernest Lochou donated blood for the first time, his goal was clear—to donate blood 100 times in his life. He exceeded this objective by donating for the 101st time last December.

"I think it is important to set a goal for every new project you begin," he says.

Originally from Brittany in France, he arrived in Québec in the early 1950s and began his career as a donor in 1954, at age 24. While working for the company Brown Boveri, he made a rather extraordinary commitment to donating blood.

He explains: "I and three other foremen vowed to never miss a blood drive in our neighbourhood and to never stop donating. I have the temperament of a

Breton, you know, and when I decide to do something, I do it!"

One day, several years ago, he learned that the son of a colleague at Brown Boveri had had a serious car accident and needed multiple transfusions. In addition, the hospital he was at was experiencing a shortage of blood products. In a flash, Mr Lochou went to the hospital, accompanied by a group of donors recruited at the plant.

Throughout his career, in which he went on to become a manager at Westinghouse and later retired, Mr Lochou has made it a point of honour to raise awareness among colleagues and friends about donating blood.

"I was 14 years old when WWII ended," he says, "and I saw many horrific things. I told myself I had to do my part."

In July 2001, which will mark the end of his career as a donor, Ernest Lochou will be able to proudly say: Mission accomplished!

A family affair

Mr Lochou was delighted to have been recruited for his 101st donation by his own granddaughters! Catherine and Daphné are both students at Pensionnat des Sacrés-Coeurs in Saint-Bruno, which organizes an annual blood drive.

Astounded by the efficient organization of this blood drive entirely planned by Roger Plourde and his grade 6 students, Mr Lochou took the time to write this note of congratulations to the organizers:

"I was really impressed with the participation, efficiency and seriousness of these young students concerned about the gift of life. Congratulations to the dedicated teachers, volunteer mothers and the efficient and tireless team from HÉMA-QUÉBEC."

Info-Drive

For information about blood drives **in the Montréal region**
(514) 832-0873 or 1 800 343-SANG
www.hema-quebec.qc.ca

For information about blood drives **in the Québec City region**
(418) 650-7230 or 1 800 761-6610
www.hema-quebec.qc.ca

Customer service (donor information):
1 800 847-2525

Did you know that...

In 1999-2000, HÉMA-QUÉBEC:

- Held 2,000 blood drives
- Welcomed 276,689 donors at its blood drives, including 33,202 new donors
- Collected an average of 115 donations per blood drive
- Relied on the precious support of 25,000 volunteers



Mr Lochou with his granddaughters, Daphné and Catherine

NO VACATION FOR THE BLOOD SUPPLY!

During the summer, HÉMA-QUÉBEC counts on your generosity more than ever to help maintain the blood supply. Why not take advantage of the summer holidays to give the gift of life?



A recipient's story

Carolyn Samuel

"That someone had the courage to give his or her blood to save a life, without getting anything in return, it's an amazing gift!"

In August 1999, while on a camping trip, Carolyn Samuel was astonished to notice that she was covered with bruises. Following a visit to the doctor and after a series of tests, the 23-year-old was diagnosed with acute myelocytic leukemia.

Shortly thereafter, Carolyn began the first of two chemotherapy treatments which put her back on the road to recovery.

Carolyn recalls: "When I learned the diagnosis, I cried for maybe five minutes. Then I said to myself that I had to fight. As I had a great deal of support, I was able to beat the disease without thinking any negative thoughts." On November 22, 1999, less than three months after her diagnosis, Carolyn's disease went into remission.

During her treatment, she received 121 transfusions of platelets, red blood cells and plasma. "I had never



Carolyn Samuel

given blood," she says, "because I was afraid of needles!"

Although she cannot donate blood herself, Carolyn now encourages her friends and family to do so. "You know, it's not a cliché to say that donating blood means giving the gift of life. When I received blood, I could feel all the good it did me."

"Sometimes, I wonder whether the donors were men or women, or whether they were my age. That someone had the courage to give his or her blood to save a life, without getting anything in return, it's an amazing gift!"

A teacher at an early childhood centre in Montréal, Carolyn returned to work last August.

International Year of Volunteers

Solidarity and fun!

We rarely stop to think that without volunteers entire sectors of our society would grind to a halt. Not a day goes by that men and women don't help other people live better lives, express themselves, discover themselves and just feel good.

At HÉMA-QUÉBEC, volunteering is at the very heart of our activities—donating blood is a voluntary, unpaid gesture. Also, organizing blood drives is an extremely generous volunteer act. Thousands of volunteers support us in this singular task of collecting blood donations by doing various tasks at the blood drives. Accordingly, our activities, which enable 70,000 patients to receive a transfusion every year, are entirely based on volunteer work.

If we added up the hours generously given by the 300,000 volunteers (donors, organizers, volunteers at blood drives and telephone recruiters), the result would be over 1 million hours dedicated to blood donation.

To recognize this admirable work and enable us to express our gratitude, Volunteer Week was held from April 22-28, as part of the International Year of Volunteers.

To one and all—Thank you!

Francine Décar
Executive Director

She says: "Combined with the treatments, the transfusions enabled me to recover and live a totally normal life today. As a recipient, the only thing I can say to the donors is—Thank you! If there were no donors, there would be no blood. And if there were no blood, I would not be here today. It's as simple as that!"

Association of Blood Donation Volunteers News from the Ottawa Valley

In 1998, volunteers concerned with promoting blood donation in Québec formed the ten regional chapters of the Association of Blood Donation Volunteers (ABDV).

The Ottawa Valley chapter, chaired by Jean-Pierre de Beaumont, has drawn up its first plan of action for its territory, which extends as far as Petite-Nation. At a meeting on February 12, the members of the new regional board set out the Association's projects and expectations for the coming months. Accordingly, the volunteers added five objectives to their mandate.

First, the volunteers wish to start a regional bank of helpers/volunteers to assist at blood drives. These volunteers would also be trained so as to maintain the high standards of the ABDV.

Moreover, under their education plan, the ABDV will set up stands to recruit volunteers at blood drives, as well as booths in other strategic locations, such as shopping centres, to hand out information on donating blood. Promotion will also take place through talks given at local social clubs.

A third approach will rely on the media—local and student newspapers, the Internet and television—to advertise dates of blood drives. "Promotion and education are the main objectives of our organization," stresses Mr de Beaumont.

Two other projects will focus on keeping a register of blood drives and evaluating the latter to assess donor satisfaction.

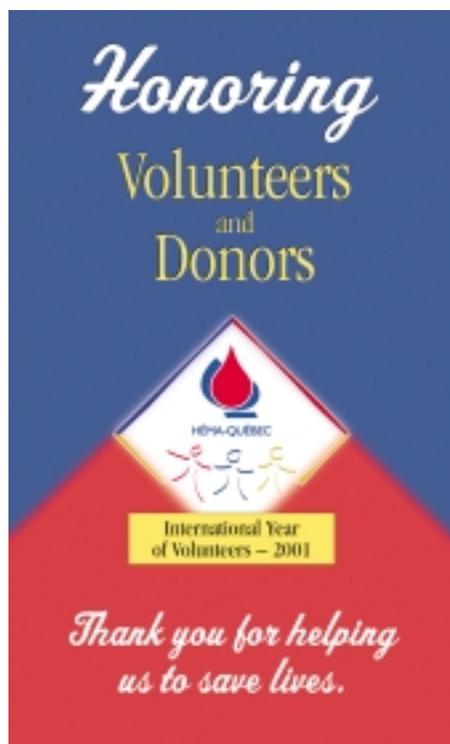


From left to right, Pierre-André Labonté, Nicole Bessette, Josée Bernier, Alain St-Amour, Elizabeth Rémillard, Claude Millette, Yves Forget, Alain-Luc Bourré, Jean-Pierre de Beaumont. Absent: Luigi Carlo Petro and Yan Michaud

All of these actions stem from our main objective, which is to encourage people to donate blood and save lives.

Each project is a priority, and the personal motivation of each member allows the ABDV in the Ottawa Valley to work together. Good luck to the Ottawa Valley!

Elizabeth Rémillard
Regional Board, Ottawa Valley



Great honour for ABDV president

The president of the Association of Blood Donation Volunteers (ABDV), Robert Bédard, has been recognized for his long-standing volunteer work by the Governor General of Canada, her Excellency Adrienne Clarkson. On January 4, Mr Bédard was one of 59 recipients of the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award, the highest honour a Canadian volunteer can receive.



Robert Bédard

Created in April 1996, this award honours individuals who provide significant unpaid, voluntary, behind-the-scenes help or care to families or community groups. This may include care of a person, services rendered to a group or dedication to a community or humanitarian cause.

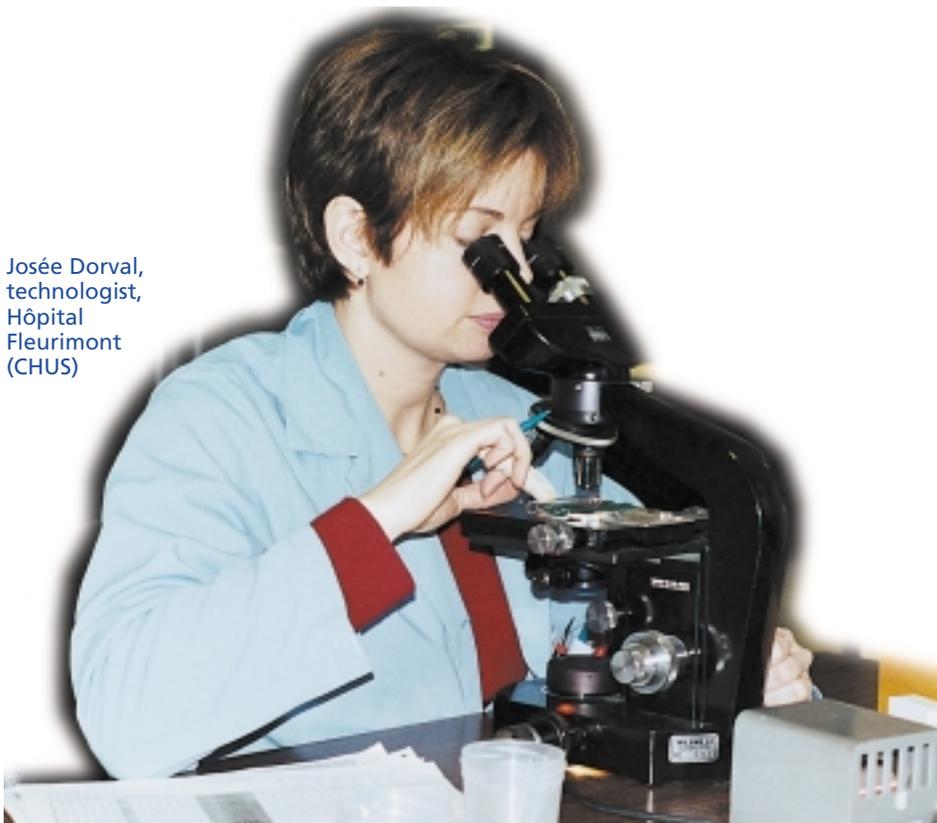
In addition to presiding over the ABDV, Mr Bédard works actively with Centraide. Municipal authorities in Charlesbourg, Mr Bédard's hometown, nominated him for this award. Congratulations to Mr Bédard for this highly deserved award.

Special issue :

« Blood banks »

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, blood banks are an essential link in the transfusion chain, a place where the use of blood products in hospitals is planned, managed and monitored. Day after day, blood bank personnel are prepared to face all situations.

Josée Dorval,
technologist,
Hôpital
Fleurimont
(CHUS)



Every year, HÉMA-QUÉBEC delivers some 340,000 blood components to the blood banks at the 117 hospitals in Québec, enabling them to meet the needs of 70,000 patients. Among the medical interventions that require transfusions are surgical operations or procedures, organ transplants, cancer and anemia treatments as well as the resuscitation of trauma victims.

The structure of a blood bank

Blood bank activities, including receipt, delivery, conservation and analysis of blood components, are numerous and respect the highest quality and safety standards. Under the supervision of a hematologist, a blood bank includes a team of skilled laboratory technologists, generally supervised by a transfusion safety assistant and manager. In certain institutions, there is also an assistant chief or a coordinator. The assistant oversees the technical and/or administrative aspect of the blood bank. His/her role consists specifically in setting out and implementing good practices used in their blood bank, in addition to training technologists. "We write the operational and technical procedures governing blood bank laboratories and ensure they are fully understood and applied. We are also responsible for overseeing the quality of equipment," stated France Bellemare, assistant at Hôpital Notre-Dame of the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM).

Special Hospital Blood banks

"Every time a procedure is changed, I ensure the entire staff is informed rapidly," states Carol Garcia, assistant chief technologist at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC).

The transfusion safety manager is responsible for ensuring the safety of the transfusion for the recipient, from the time the product leaves the blood bank until it is administered to the patient, and even beyond that, in the event of a transfusion reaction.

As Denise Pruneau-Fortier, transfusion safety manager at Hôpital Fleurimont of the Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke (CHUS) points out: "Over the past few months, on several occasions, I have prepared and given training sessions for nursing staff on various aspects of the transfusion process, such as the quality of specimens, the specific nature of blood products during transfusion and the adverse effects related to transfusions."



Sylvie Lessard, technologist, Hôpital Notre-Dame (CHUM)

"To work for us, you must be capable of reacting quickly in emergency situations"

Blood component needs of hospitals visited for this report

Hospital	Fresh components transfused annually (rounded figure)
Centre hospitalier de Val-d'Or	1,200
Centre hospitalier régional de Rimouski	5,300
CHUM – Hôpital Notre-Dame	15,600
CHUQ – Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise	4,000
CHUS – Hôpital Fleurimont	14,400
MUHC – Royal Victoria Hospital	21,500

Angèle Froment, assistant chief, and France Bellemare, assistant at Hôpital Notre-Dame of the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM)

Françoise Lavoie, assistant at the blood bank for the Centre hospitalier universitaire de Québec (CHUQ) institutions



Special Hospital Blood banks

Strict training

Blood bank personnel have basic training in medical technology, combined with several weeks of intensive training after they are hired. "To work for us, you must be capable of reacting quickly in emergency situations," stresses Françoise Lavoie, assistant at the blood bank for the Centre hospitalier universitaire de Québec (CHUQ) institutions.

"It takes a certain amount of time to make the link between theory and practice and to develop the knowledge specific to a blood bank laboratory. There is a multitude of details to remember," states Angèle Froment, assistant chief at the CHUM's Hôpital Notre-Dame. At blood banks, personnel strive to maintain an environment conducive to the continuous improvement of practices at all levels. When we visited Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise in Québec City, a CHUQ institution, personnel were

receiving training on the Gel test, a technique used to screen for antibodies in the patient's blood and to establish compatibility between donor and recipient.



"The new blood system is a big plus for patients"

Dr Joffre-Claude Allard, blood bank director, Centre hospitalier régional de Rimouski

The new blood system

Québec blood supplier adheres to the regulations of Health Canada's Bureau of Biologics and Radiopharmaceuticals. The principle underlying the reorganization of the blood supply system is as follows: To hold each sector of the system accountable for its assigned function. In Québec, there are three levels of accountability:

- A supplier, responsible and accountable for the safety of blood components, i.e., the quality and quantity of the blood supply. This is HÉMA-QUÉBEC.
- Hospitals and physicians, responsible and accountable for the safety and quality of the transfusion act. Moreover, hospitals will pay fees for the blood components they receive. This will be the main difference between the Québec system and that in effect in the rest of the country.
- A Hemovigilance Committee, responsible for overseeing public health in terms of blood system supply and management. This committee reports to the Minister of Health and Social Services, who is in turn accountable for the safety of the system.

Designated centres and affiliated centres

In the new system, a distinction is drawn between designated hospitals and affiliated hospitals. The 20 designated hospitals each have a blood bank and are responsible for overseeing the quality of transfusions for a group of hospitals in one or several regions.

The 79 affiliated hospitals each have a blood bank under the supervision of a hematologist or group of hematologists from a designated centre.

Nicole Gagnon, assistant, Denise Pruneau-Fortier, transfusion safety manager, and Dr Patrice Beauregard, blood bank medical director (CHUS)



Blood bank refrigerator - Hôpital Notre-Dame

Special Hospital Blood banks

Other hospitals are in the process of standardizing methods between designated centres and affiliated centres (see caption on page 7). States Johanne Beaulieu, assistant at the Centre hospitalier régional de Rimouski (CHRR): "By June, we will have visited our ten affiliated centres to standardize both our work practices and our equipment." In Sherbrooke, the blood bank's protocol is based on the "golden hour", an aggressive treatment approach for multiple-trauma victims where healthcare workers in various sectors are notified that a patient is being brought to Emergency. Explains Dr Patrice Beaugregard, medical director of the CHUS blood bank: "In these specific cases, the blood bank technologist is notified by pager even before the patient arrives. She immediately prepares a cooler containing units of O negative packed

cells, which she sends to the trauma unit. These units of blood are available in the Emergency Room as soon as the patient arrives."

"In Sherbrooke, the blood bank's protocol is based on the «golden hour»"

Dr Patrice Beaugregard,
blood bank medical director,
Centre hospitalier
universitaire
de Sherbrooke



Nicole Massicotte et Manon Turgeon, technologists, Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise (CHUQ)



Françoise Lavoie, assistant (CHUQ), and Carole Joly, blood bank coordinator, Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise (CHUQ)

Blood groups repartition

IN CANADA

	Rh positive (Rh+), 85%	Rh negative (Rh-), 15%
Group O: 46%	O+: 39%	O-: 7%
Group A: 42%	A+: 36%	A-: 6%
Group B: 9%	B+: 7.5%	B-: 1.5%
Group AB: 3%	AB+: 2.5%	AB-: 0.5%

Special Hospital Blood banks

Strict inventory management

Other than safety, blood bank managers are constantly concerned with keeping losses to a minimum. For example, units of packed cells are stored in the refrigerator by expiry date to enable good rotation of inventory.

"Due to strict inventory management, we use approximately 99% of the fresh components delivered by HÉMA-QUÉBEC," states France Bellemare.

"At the CHRR, we believe that donors have the right to assume that their blood will be used as responsibly as possible.

Accordingly, we make inventory management

a priority," states Johanne Beaulieu.

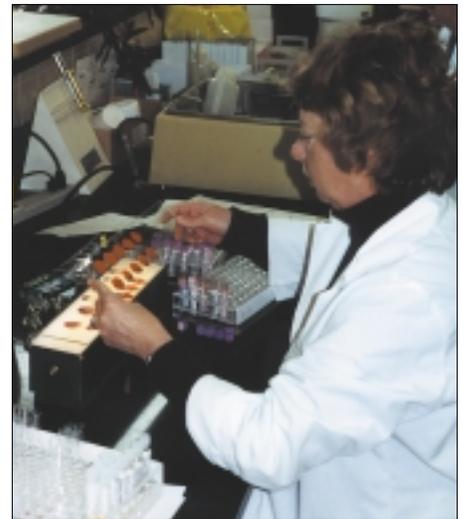
Explains Carol Garcia: "Every morning and afternoon, we thoroughly go over our inventory to ensure that reserved components that were not used are put back into circulation."

"Every afternoon, we receive a list of patients who will have surgery the following day and for whom blood components have been prescribed," explains Carole Joly, coordinator at Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise. "After determining whether the patient has his/her own blood reserve through the autologous donation program, we order blood components from HÉMA-QUÉBEC."

"Due to strict inventory management, we use approximately 99% of the fresh components delivered by HÉMA-QUÉBEC"

France Bellemare, assistant, Hôpital Notre-Dame (CHUM)

Ginette Saukas, technologist, Hôpital Notre-Dame (CHUM)



France Rouette, technologist, Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise (CHUQ)

A matter of cooperation

Several committees enable blood bank personnel to work together and profit from the best practices:

- The National Advisory Committee on Transfusion Medicine, chaired by Dr Douglas Fish (Centre hospitalier Maisonneuve-Rosemont), a provincial forum on the scientific aspects related to transfusion practices and the use of blood components;
- The advisory committees on transfusion medicine in Montréal and Québec City, chaired respectively by Dr Gwendoline SpurlI (Royal Victoria Hospital, MUHC) and by Dr Joffre-Claude Allard (CHRR);
- The User committees in Montréal and Québec City, which bring together all blood bank personnel and managers of Customer Services–Hospitals at HÉMA-QUÉBEC. The Montréal committee is chaired by Alain Charron, transfusion safety manager at Hôpital Notre-Dame; the Québec City committee is chaired by Francine Bastille, blood bank assistant at Centre hospitalier affilié universitaire de Québec (CHA);
- The new Comité des directeurs de banque de sang (Blood Bank Manager Committee) which, as its name implies, is an association of blood bank managers at Québec healthcare institutions.



Carol Garcia, assistant, and Gwendoline SpurlI, blood bank medical director, McGill University Health Centre (MUHC)

Special Hospital Blood banks

“Our relationship with HÉMA-QUÉBEC is professional, clear and open”

Marcelle Latreille, assistant, Centre hospitalier de Val-d’Or

Geographic location poses a challenge

In Montréal and Québec City, blood components are delivered by HÉMA-QUÉBEC's delivery service, whereas in outlying areas the components generally arrive by bus or plane.

For some hospitals, such as Centre hospitalier de Val-d’Or, the distance factor complicates inventory management. "Our geographic location is such that we must carefully plan our needs," states Marcelle Latreille, blood bank assistant. "In cases of emergency, HÉMA-QUÉBEC takes the necessary measures to meet patient needs." The Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Sherbrooke (CHUS), one of four hemophilia centres in Québec, serves a clientele that often requires emergency treatment. "Given the distance of our centre and our regional vocation," states Nicole Gagnon, CHUS blood bank assistant, "we must strictly manage our reserves to maintain an optimal inventory at all times."

Early in the year, HÉMA-QUÉBEC had to deliver blood components to the CHUS by helicopter, an exceptional situation. "We never know what each day has in store," states Ms. Gagnon. "By definition, emergencies are unpredictable. We have to be ready for anything!"

Links with HÉMA-QUÉBEC

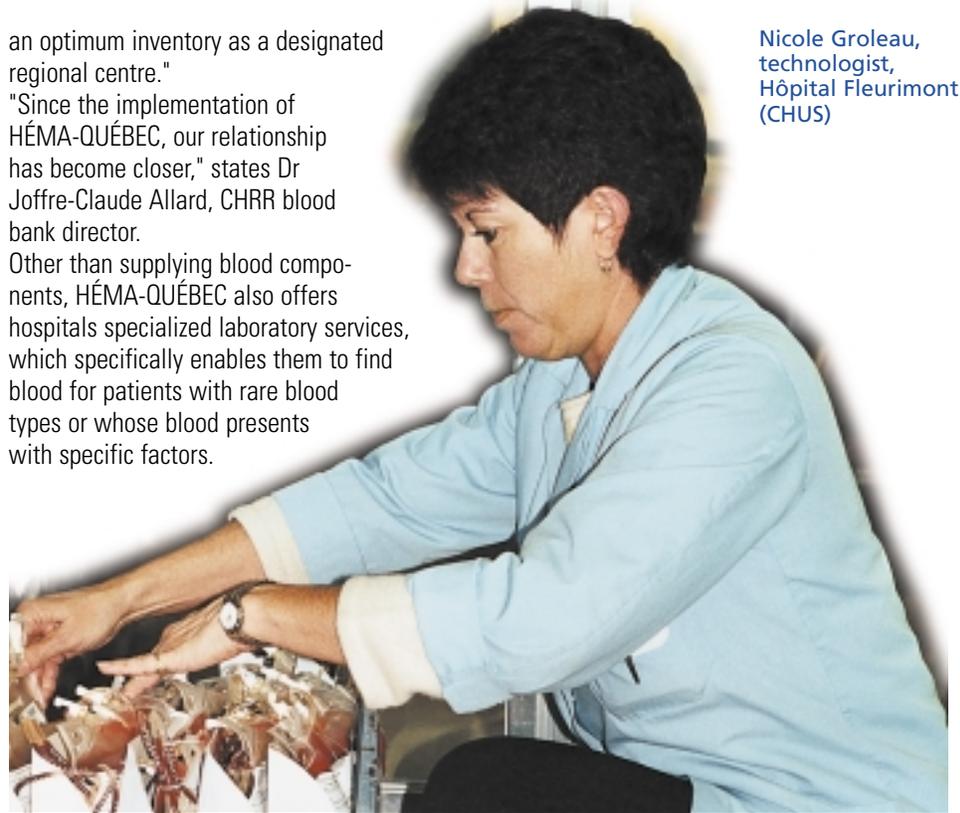
Both for personnel in Customer Services—Hospitals at HÉMA-QUÉBEC as well as for blood bank managers, dialogue is the key to a good customer-supplier relationship.

"Our relationship with HÉMA-QUÉBEC is professional, clear and open," states Marcelle Latreille. "HÉMA-QUÉBEC personnel understand our need to maintain

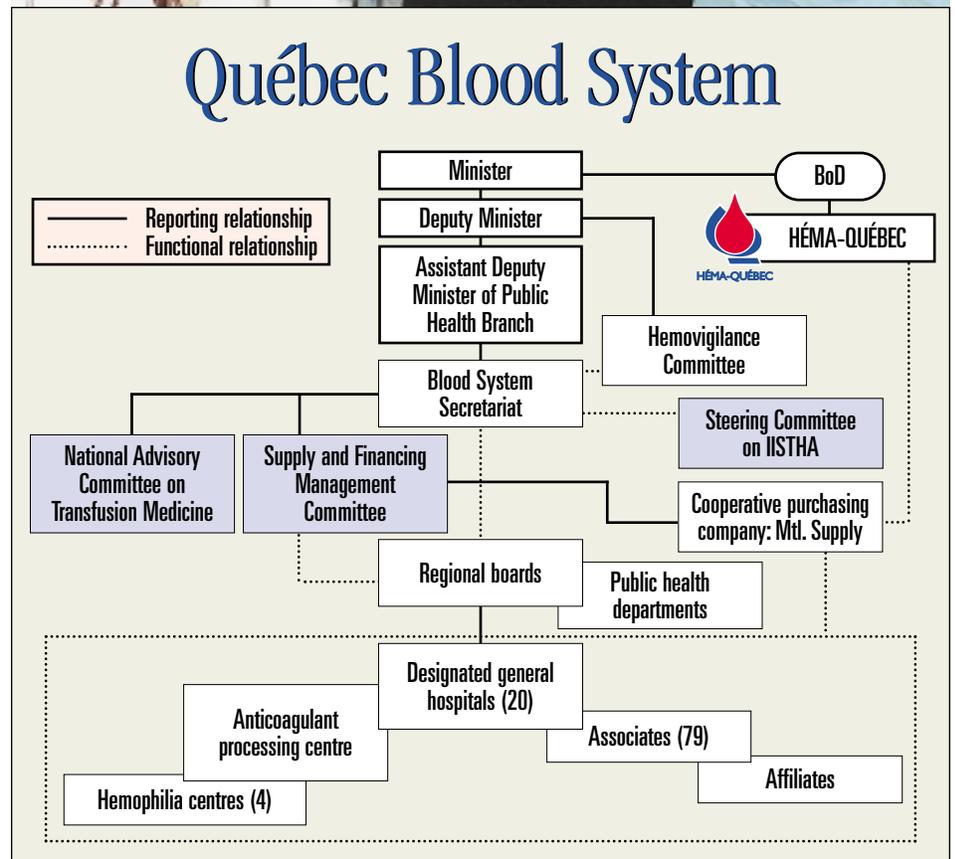
an optimum inventory as a designated regional centre."

"Since the implementation of HÉMA-QUÉBEC, our relationship has become closer," states Dr Joffre-Claude Allard, CHRR blood bank director.

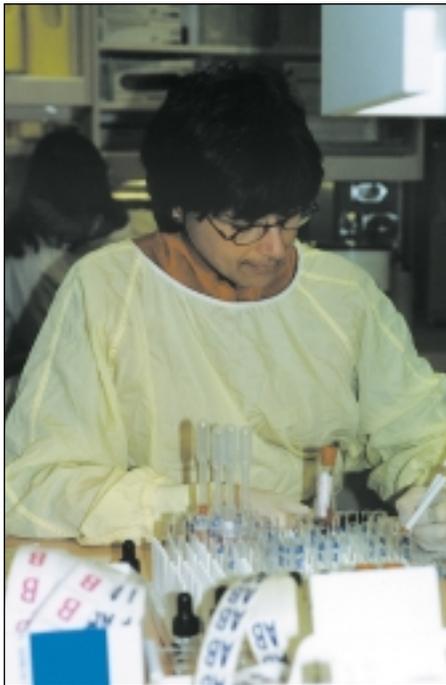
Other than supplying blood components, HÉMA-QUÉBEC also offers hospitals specialized laboratory services, which specifically enables them to find blood for patients with rare blood types or whose blood presents with specific factors.



Nicole Groleau, technologist, Hôpital Fleurimont (CHUS)



Special Hospital Blood banks



Martine Noël, technologist,
McGill University Health Centre (MUHC)

Trends

When asked about trends in using blood components, blood bank managers have noted the same phenomenon. Says Dr Yves Lapointe, chief of hematology-blood bank at the CHUM: "Trends are leaning toward less transfusions during surgery. However, factors such as the aging population are balancing this out and tend to stabilize our use of blood components."

Certain alternatives to transfusion, such as autologous donations, where donors build up their own blood reserve before surgery, or recovery of peri-operative blood loss, where a patient's blood is retransfused during the surgery, enable surgeons to offer patients more choices.

States Dr Pierre Ouellet, hematologist and blood bank director at the CHUQ: "We are currently evaluating a peri-operative blood conservation program for cardiac, orthopedic and vascular surgery. Patients don't know a lot about transfusion during surgery. It is our responsibility to tell them so that they can make informed decisions."



Ghislaine
Glaude,
technologist,
Hôpital
Fleurimont
(CHUS)

"Just because a patient signs a consent form does not mean they are making an informed decision. The patient must be told about the alternatives to a blood transfusion and the possible effects of a transfusion"

Dr Gwendoline Spurr,
blood bank medical director,
Royal Victoria Hospital, MUHC

Informed consent

In his recommendations, Justice Krever stated "that risks, benefits, and alternatives [must] be presented in language the patient will understand and in a manner that permits questions, repetitions, and sufficient time for assimilation." Consequently, the Secrétariat du système du sang of the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec recently produced an information pamphlet for blood product recipients. Accordingly, patients are better informed about the nature of blood products and the attention given to safety. This pamphlet can be consulted on the Secrétariat du système du sang Web site (www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/systeme-du-sang). "Just because a patient signs a consent form does not mean they are making an informed decision," states Dr Gwendoline Spurr, blood bank medical director at the Royal Victoria Hospital of the MUHC. "The patient must be told about the alternatives to a blood transfusion and the possible effects of a transfusion. At our hospital, we are currently studying ways of enabling patients to give informed consent." States Dr Joffre-Claude Allard, "In my opinion, a transfusion must be considered in the same light as any medical intervention. At the CHRR, we have trained our physicians in the importance of explaining the transfusion act and the alternatives to patients. The new blood system is a big plus for patients."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- HÉMA-QUÉBEC: www.hema-quebec.qc.ca
- Canadian Blood Services: www.servicessanguins.ca
- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec: www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/systeme-du-sang/
- Hemovigilance Committee: www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/hemovigilance/
- Health Canada: www.hc-sc.gc.ca
- Canadian Society for Transfusion Medicine: www.med.mun.ca/cstm

Thanks

HÉMA-QUÉBEC would like to extend its sincere thanks to the following people for their invaluable collaboration in producing this report:

- France Bellemare, assistant, Angèle Froment, assistant chief, Alain Charron, transfusion safety manager, and Dr Yves Lapointe, chief of hematology-blood bank, Hôpital Notre-Dame, CHUM
- Françoise Lavoie, assistant, Dr Pierre Ouellet, blood bank director, CHUQ institutions, and Carole Joly, blood bank coordinator, Hôpital Saint-François d'Assise
- Nicole Gagnon, assistant, Denise Pruneau-Fortier, transfusion safety manager, and Dr Patrice Beaugard, blood bank medical director, CHUS
- Marcelle Latreille, assistant chief technologist, Centre hospitalier de Val-d'Or
- Carol Garcia, assistant chief, Dr Gwendoline M. Spurrll, blood bank medical director, and Chantal Beaugard, public relations, Royal Victoria Hospital, MUHC
- Johanne Beaulieu, assistant, and Dr Joffre-Claude Allard, blood bank director, CHRR



Alain Charron, transfusion safety manager, Hôpital Notre-Dame (CHUM)



INFORMED CONSENT

A workshop for improving physician-patient communications

The Bayer Institute of Health Care Communications, the Canadian Blood Services and HÉMA-QUÉBEC have designed, in collaboration, a workshop called "Going beyond informed consent." It focuses on the practical application of informed consent and joint decision-making between physicians and patients, particularly with respect to blood and blood components.

"The workshop, stemming from a year of consultation, enables physicians and other healthcare professionals to learn more about informed consent," states Dr Mindy Goldman, Assistant Senior Director, Medical Affairs, Hematology, at HÉMA-QUÉBEC.

Hospital service laboratories

Our clients are satisfied

The results of a recent survey of blood bank technicians' satisfaction with our specialized laboratory services were highly positive.

Done by the firm ÉchoSondage for HÉMA-QUÉBEC, this study was also aimed at gauging our clients' interest in new services that could be offered.

The results of this study indicated a high level of satisfaction with all services provided by HÉMA-QUÉBEC.

Telephone interviews lasting approximately 20 minutes were conducted with 105 chief technicians in Québec hospitals, a sample which lends a high degree of accuracy to the results.

Explains Dr Mindy Goldman, Assistant Senior Director, Medical Affairs–Hematology: "It is interesting to note that all people contacted agreed to answer the survey. This shows the interest technicians have in HÉMA-QUÉBEC."

The results of this study indicated a high level of satisfaction with all services provided by HÉMA-QUÉBEC.

The specialized services offered at our Montréal and Ste-Foy laboratories specifically enable us to find blood for patients with rare blood types or whose blood presents with specific factors.

Training was at the top of the list of new services potentially of interest to head technicians in hospitals.

Information to donors

Every time you donate blood, a HÉMA-QUÉBEC nurse must determine whether your red cells contain enough of the iron-rich protein called hemoglobin. This is commonly referred to as your iron level.

To check your hemoglobin level, the HÉMA-QUÉBEC nurse takes a drop of your blood by pricking your fingertip.

If you have ever been told that you could not donate blood because your hemoglobin level was too low, rest assured that in many cases this is only a temporary situation.

Eating foods rich in iron can maintain a higher hemoglobin level. Here are a few examples of such foods:

- Green vegetables, such as spinach, broccoli, snow peas
- Legumes
- Animal organ meats, such as liver, heart or kidney
- Molasses
- Pablum, which you can add to muffins, cereal or oatmeal

Note that it is possible for your hemoglobin level to be low on the day of donation even though you may be in excellent health.

HÉMA-QUÉBEC successfully passes two inspections

Inspectors from the Bureau of Biologics and Radiopharmaceuticals (BBR), a Health Canada organization, have renewed HÉMA-QUÉBEC's license following an annual audit of procedures.

The inspections were carried out between December 4-8, 2000 in Québec City and between January 31 and February 9, 2001 in Montréal.

Throughout their audit, the BBR inspectors noted that the safety of blood components was a priority for all HÉMA-QUÉBEC personnel.

The renewal of its license indicates that Québec's blood supplier respects the safety measures required by Health Canada and shows that the public and hospital patients have reason to trust in HÉMA-QUÉBEC and its personnel.

A matter of life... and good practices

This fall, HÉMA-QUÉBEC launched a vast in-house poster campaign to promote good manufacturing and good work practices, known as GMP/GWP.

The posters illustrate the different themes related to GMP/GWP, including auditing, standard operating procedures, training, procedure monitoring, error management and documentation, while emphasizing the relationship between the quality of day-to-day work and the safety of the blood supply in Québec.

This campaign is part of HÉMA-QUÉBEC's vision of becoming a leader in its field in North America by 2005.



Say it with flowers!

On September 5, 2000, the mandate of the team responsible for analyzing the serum bank came to an end. Note that under the serum bank project, six HÉMA-QUÉBEC employees spent almost a year analyzing over 176,000 blood samples taken between April 1988 and May 1992.

The serum bank project was aimed at detecting the hepatitis C virus in people who have not given blood since May 1992, when the second generation of hepatitis C screening tests was introduced.

The Laboratoire de santé publique du Québec (LSPQ) generously loaned laboratory space to HÉMA-QUÉBEC for the project.

To thank the LSPQ for its exceptional collaboration and the cooperation of its staff, HÉMA-QUÉBEC gave it a Japanese tree lilac, a symbol of friendship.

Construction of the new HÉMA-QUÉBEC laboratories It's underway!

On October 24, 2000, Francine Décary, Executive Director of HÉMA-QUÉBEC, turned over the first shovel of earth, marking the beginning of construction work on the Company's new laboratories in Saint-Laurent.



In the photo: Francine Décary, Bernard Paquet, Mayor of Saint-Laurent, Suzanne Couillard, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec, and Claude Pichette, Chairman of the Board of Directors of HÉMA-QUÉBEC



Construction of the steel structure



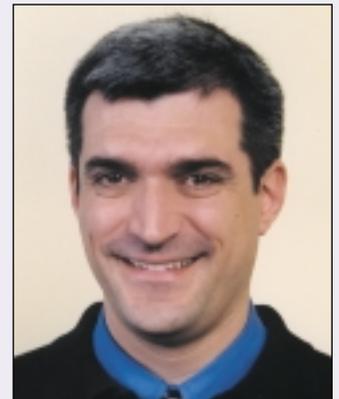
Welcome Simon Fournier and Yvan Charbonneau



Yvan Charbonneau

On January 22, HÉMA-QUÉBEC welcomed Simon Fournier to its ranks as Senior Director, Information Technologies. Before joining the HÉMA-QUÉBEC team, Mr Fournier occupied a management position in the IT department at Aluminerie Alouette in Sept-Îles.

April 2 marked the arrival of Yvan Charbonneau, Senior Director, Operations. An industrial engineer, Mr Charbonneau was previously employed by Industries Lassonde inc. in Granby, where he worked for 10 years as Vice-president, Operations.



Simon Fournier

HÉMA-QUÉBEC accredited by the AABB

Following an exhaustive evaluation by specially trained AABB representatives, HÉMA-QUÉBEC has obtained accreditation by the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB). The representatives' mandate is to evaluate the functioning of blood banks and transfusion services as well as their medical, technical and administrative practices to determine whether they meet or exceed AABB standards. Having met all of the requirements, HÉMA-QUÉBEC joins the ranks of the some 2,000 establishments, both in the U.S. and abroad, accredited by the AABB.

In short

HÉMA-QUÉBEC won a Mérite award at the Ovation gala, organized by the Montreal chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators. This award highlights the excellent work of the public relations team with support from the steering committee in developing and applying the communications plan for implementing the PROGESA blood management software by Mak System.

On March 8, the HÉMA-QUÉBEC research and development team was awarded a \$30,000 grant from the Aventis Behring Canada Research Fund. This grant will enable the team of Dr Renée Bazin, research director, to recruit additional personnel to continue working on the laboratory culture of blood cells in the aim of producing usable immunoglobulin as a substitute for that currently prepared from donor blood.

Dr Renée Bazin is one of 11 Canadian researchers who will receive a research grant from this prestigious fund, established in partnership with HÉMA-QUÉBEC and the Canadian Blood Services.

Bayer-Canadian Blood Services- HÉMA-QUÉBEC Partnership Fund

Supporting research for 10 years

On October 20, Dr Réal Lemieux, Senior Director, Research and Development, outlined HÉMA-QUÉBEC's priorities and research programs at a symposium organized to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Bayer-Canadian Blood Services-HÉMA-QUÉBEC Partnership Fund.

To mark the occasion, renowned researchers gathered in Toronto to look back on 10 years of blood product research and development activities and raise the issue of the future direction of research support.

Founded in 1990, the Fund is the result of collaboration between Bayer Inc., the Canadian Blood Services and HÉMA-QUÉBEC. Every year, it grants \$2.5 million to support research activities into blood products and related fields in Canada. Since its inception, it has provided support for 20-25 projects every year.

"The Partnership Fund has enabled exciting research opportunities in fields where no financing was previously available," stressed Réal Lemieux at the meeting. "This Fund encourages scientists to focus on the practical applications of our research so as to produce concrete results that will benefit patients."

Next June, the Partnership Fund's selection committee will meet, including Dr Lemieux, to determine which research projects will be funded in 2001.



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