



Canadian
Blood
Services

BLOOD
PLASMA
STEM CELLS
ORGANS
& TISSUES

YOUR GIFTS SAVE LIVES

Philanthropy Report
2023–2024

PUBLISHED FOR SUPPORTERS OF
CANADIAN BLOOD SERVICES



Wai Yin,
blood recipient and
financial donor

A message of gratitude

from Dr. Graham Sher, our chief executive officer



Looking back on 2023–2024, I am once again filled with gratitude and awe at the incredible generosity of our financial donors and partners. Your gifts, whether individual or corporate through our Partners for Life program, have made a substantial difference, helping us do more to support patients across the country.

We recently updated our strategic direction to focus on better matching our products and services to patient and system needs, growing and diversifying our donor and registrant base, investing in our people, and enhancing our digital and physical infrastructure. By focusing on these priorities, we will be better positioned to meet the evolving needs of patients — and your support is vital to this work.

The past year has also seen some exciting changes to donor eligibility, based on years of scientific research and surveillance. We received Health Canada’s approval to re-open eligibility to those who spent significant time in France, Ireland or the United Kingdom during outbreaks of variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease in the 1980s and 1990s. This change alone opened the door to thousands of potential new donors. Financial supporters and Partners for Life teams have been invaluable in raising awareness of this change and recruiting new donors. Your contributions are essential to keeping our inventory stable and resilient.

Your generosity has also strengthened our position as a leader in sustaining **Canada’s Lifeline** through training future transfusion medicine specialists and advancing critical research. The Elianna Saidenberg

Transfusion Medicine Traineeship Award — now funded entirely through philanthropic contributions — is vital to supporting those who choose this specialty and contribute their expertise in this area to Canada’s health systems. Meanwhile, research into next-generation genomic sequencing will enable us to better match patients with the exact blood products they need, which could dramatically improve outcomes for patients in high-risk groups.

You’ll read stories about these developments in the subsequent pages of this report. You’ll also meet some of the people and companies who have made a difference in various ways, for example, by recruiting new donors through our Assignment Saving Lives program and by integrating gifts to Canadian Blood Services into their corporate culture as Partners for Life.

In everything we do, your financial contributions make all the difference — to patients across the country and all who love them. By helping us realize our vision of helping every patient, matching every need and serving every Canadian, you are an indispensable partner in our work. The entire Canadian Blood Services team joins me in extending our heartfelt gratitude.

Dr. Graham D. Sher, OC, MB BCh, PhD, FRCPC
Chief Executive Officer

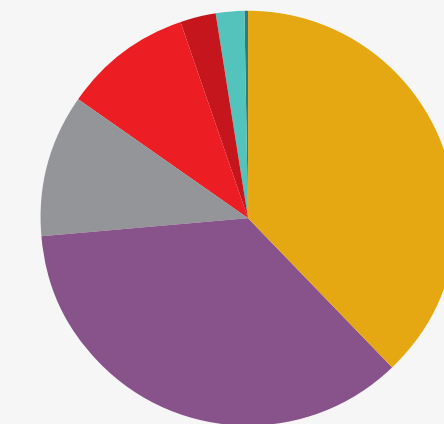
By the numbers: Financial donations

\$1,646,394¹ contributed by financial donors in 2023–2024

Who gave financially?²

Charities and foundations	37%	<div style="width: 37%;"></div>
Individuals	35%	<div style="width: 35%;"></div>
Companies	27%	<div style="width: 27%;"></div>
Other	1%	<div style="width: 1%;"></div>

Areas supported by financial donors



Research	38%
Area of greatest need	36%
Gifts in kind	11%
Blood	10%
Plasma	3%
Stem cells	2%
Organs and tissues	<1%

■ Research and innovation 38%
Donations supported the Red Cell Genomics proof-of-concept study, paving the way for more personalized care for patients with complex blood product needs.

■ Area of greatest need 36%
Donations supported donor centre enhancements and the purchase of equipment to increase preparedness and inspire donor retention.

■ Gifts in kind 11%
Donations of non-biological products and services supported essential aspects of our operations, such as rental of clinic space and purchase of post-donation snacks, helping us to manage expenses.

■ Blood 10%
Donations enabled future specialists to access the only transfusion medicine training program of its kind in Canada through the Elianna Saidenberg Transfusion Medicine

Traineeship Award. Donors also supported summer student recruiters building leadership skills through the Assignment Saving Lives scholarship program.

■ Plasma 3%
Donations support efforts to secure the future growth of plasma donation as we work toward our strategic goal of expanding the domestic supply of plasma in Canada.

■ Stem cells 2%
Donations supported upgrades to our Concourse Gate stem cell processing facilities, as well as market research to inform new recruitment strategies for potential stem cell donors.

■ Organs and tissues < 1%
Donations support our leadership in raising awareness about organ and tissue donation and transplantation across Canada.

¹ Includes cash donations and gifts of products or services received for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024.

² Percentages represented are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Thank you!

We are grateful to all individuals, corporations, associations and community groups for their generous gifts. Many corporations have also chosen to honour their employees' volunteerism or charitable giving with matching financial contributions. Through financial support, you are helping save and improve the lives of patients in Canada. Here, we highlight our community, corporate and event partners who donated more than \$1,000 in 2023–2024.

Community and corporate supporters

AEO Foundation
Aspac Developments Ltd.
ATCO Ltd.
August Electronics
Boyden Executive Search
British Columbia Construction Association
Canada Life
Canadian National Railway Company
CIBC
Cisco Systems Canada Co.
Citation Canada
Connor, Clark & Lunn Foundation
D's Glass & Film
Enbridge Inc.
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Gallop Family Fund at the Foundation of Greater Montréal
Giovanni Caboto Club
GML Mechanical
Granite REIT
Hill Family Foundation
Hockey Gives Blood
Horn Family Fund
Hydro One
Initia Real Estate
Intact Insurance
J&S Sales BC Inc.
Jon Witzel Contracting Ltd.
Mary & Rino Monaco Charitable Foundation
Microsoft Canada Co.
Modern Niagara Group Inc.
Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
Nicola Wealth

Orkin Canada
Paul Albrechtsen Foundation
Payworks
Plus Company
Raymond James Canada Foundation
Royal Canadian Legion Stonewall Branch 52
Shell Canada Limited
Sherlock Holmes Pubs
Shultz Family Fund at Calgary Foundation
Skelton Canada Inc.
Sunshine Building Maintenance, Inc
Tahira & Iltihab Hassan Charitable Trust
The Roger and Edith Davis Foundation
Tower Dodge
VieFUND Corporation
Wolfe Pack Warriors Foundation

Gift-in-kind supporters

Cookies by George
Domino's Pizza Barrie
Firehouse Subs – Barrie Park Place
Graziella Fine Jewellery
KIND Healthy Snacks ULC
Master Soap Makers Inc.
QUEST XO CHOCOLATE
Rock 95, Kool FM and Barrie 360
Sunnyshore Dunsmuir Howe Holding Ltd.
Town of Essex

Third-party events

2023 Kam Hon Cup, in memory of Kam Hon
Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association, Run for Calgary
Always Ben – in loving memory of Ben Becker
BAD Bash 2
Calgary Corporate Challenge
Collège Miles Macdonell Collegiate Youth Aid Society
Donate for Dustin Golf Tournament Charity Golf Tournament
Hockey Gives Blood Player Ambassadors campaign
Red Deer Toy and Collectible Show
Ricoh Canada 2023 GTA Softball Tournament
Ron Shivji's 50th Birthday & 550 Blood Donations
Stretch Fest – in memory of Michael Stretch
The Bloodbash by Resist the Throne & The Pop Cult Experience (2024)
Turning Magical 8 for Toys
White Knight Construction
Willy's Classic Fundraiser

We also appreciate those who generously left a bequest or legacy gift in 2023–2024. We are honoured when individuals continue their charitable giving through their wills, and we thank all those who have chosen to name Canadian Blood Services as a beneficiary of their legacy gifts. The thoughtfulness and generosity of these individuals will contribute to our work today and in the future. To learn more about this form of giving, visit give.blood.ca/legacy or contact us at give@blood.ca.

Improving donor-to-patient matching with next-generation genomic sequencing



Blood typing DNA sequencing.

With the generous support of financial donors, we are taking steps to enhance our ability to match donors and patients for better outcomes through DNA sequencing, also known as genomics. This emerging health-care discipline uses DNA-based testing to paint a detailed picture of a person's unique genetic makeup and characteristics, including blood type and blood group variants. This type of testing has the potential to transform transfusion medicine by enabling a new level of precise, molecular-level blood product matching. This will be especially important for those with medical conditions who rely on frequent blood transfusions,

including some higher-risk patients with blood types that are harder to match on an ongoing basis.

Currently, however, very few genomics tests have been designed for transfusion medicine, and those available to date lack the specificity needed to address the complexity of blood groups and blood group variants found across Canada's increasingly diverse population. To fill this testing gap and help us meet the evolving needs of patients in the future, we started a proof-of-concept study last year. Its aim is to develop a clinical genomic test based on next-generation sequencing, as well as the software required to interpret the test data to meet the needs of transfusion medicine and all patients who rely on it.

This ground-breaking study will have three major outcomes:

- It will enable broader and more accurate donor and recipient matching across Canada.
- It will speed up evaluation of complex cases for which transfusion is required.
- It will help us to more quickly identify donors with rare blood types and thus expand our rare blood inventory so we can better help those in need.

“This work is particularly promising for patients with sickle cell disease or other conditions that require frequent transfusion support and also for patients

with rare or highly complex blood groups, which are found across the very diverse populations in Canada,” says Celina Montemayor, medical scientific lead of the Red Cell Genomics proof-of-concept study and world leader in genomics research. “Blood typing based on one's genetic makeup will enable us to support these patients in ways that simply haven't been possible until now.”

As part of the early phases of the project, we set up a development laboratory in Brampton, Ontario, with critical equipment, including gene sequencers, centrifuges and DNA quality-control tools. We also designed the first blood group genomics panel, targeting 101 genes and tested the customized software and cloud-based infrastructure that will be used to process, analyze and store the high volumes of data produced by the study. The first test panel will be delivered within the next year to be followed by further test panels to accommodate all blood groups and their variants. To account for continuous molecular discovery in this field, we expect the genomics development program to be an ongoing effort, alongside our existing genomics testing program.

We are grateful for the generous support of the Paul Albrechtsen Foundation and Canada Life for making this work possible.

Facility upgrades help us meet the stem cell needs of Canada — and the world



Since it opened, the Concourse Gate facility has been consistently authorized by Health Canada and accredited by international standards organizations. The stem cells stored at Concourse Gate are part of an international network that gives patients access to more than 800,000 cord blood units and 41 million potential stem cell donors around the world.

Ten years ago, the support of our financial donors was instrumental in setting up our public cord blood bank, which now has collection sites in Ottawa, Brampton, Edmonton and Vancouver.

“The shipment rate for our cord blood units is in the top five globally,” says Dr. Matthew Seftel, medical director of stem cell services. “This reflects the high quality and excellent reputation of our cord blood bank.” Stem cells from donated cord blood units are used to treat more than 80 diseases and disorders and are available for anyone who needs a stem cell transplant — including those who may struggle to find a match within their own family or through the adult stem cell registries.

The Concourse Gate location in Ottawa, one of the main preservation and processing facilities for cord blood and adult stem cells in Canada, recently

underwent upgrades to expand its capacity and enhance its lifesaving work.

Limited physical space in the building meant multiple processes were often being carried out on the same production line. This reduced the facility’s efficiency and limited the role it could play in advancing innovative stem cell therapies that could lead to better patient outcomes.

To address these issues, the main lab was redesigned to make better use of available space, including creation of another production line. Modern lab benches were installed and the building’s electrical systems were overhauled. Thanks to the financial support of donors across Canada, the project was completed within six months — with no interruptions to ongoing operations.

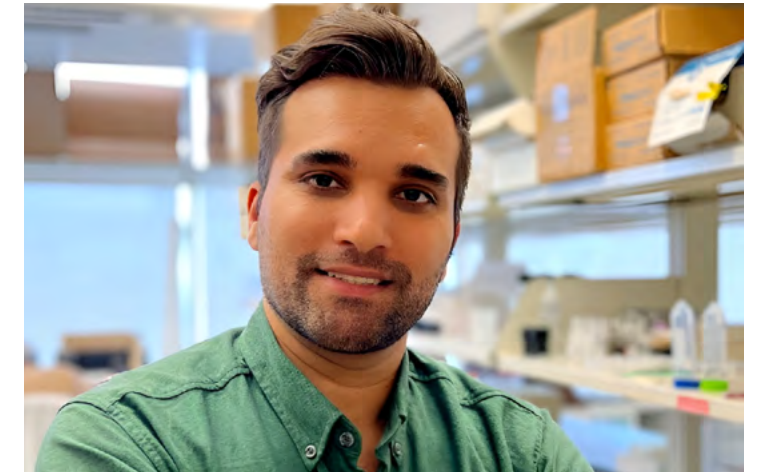
“Our infrastructure was getting the job done to meet patient

needs,” says Nicholas Dibdin, associate director of stem cell operations. “But we saw great opportunity for a proactive upgrade to serve patients more efficiently while expanding the types of work we could support.”

By optimizing the existing space, Concourse Gate has expanded capacity by 25 per cent. With more capacity, the team has been able to pioneer new methods for processing and preserving stem cells, putting them in a better position to adapt more quickly to advances in this field.

“The funds donors invested have enabled us to respond to the growing demand for cord blood and other cellular therapy products,” says Dr. Seftel. “Support from financial donors helped us carry out the work quickly and achieve excellence to help more patients live life to the fullest.”

Saving lives through blood donation and recruitment



Saeid Maghsoudi received the top award for Assignment Saving Lives in 2023.

When Saeid Maghsoudi came to Canada in 2021 to pursue a PhD in pulmonary hypertension and medicinal chemistry at the University of Manitoba, becoming a blood donor was an easy choice. He had been a long-time donor in Iran, and the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the urgent need for donors in Canada as well. Shortly after his first donation, he also started volunteering with Canadian Blood Services. Then, when he learned about Assignment Saving Lives, he saw yet another opportunity to make a difference.

Supported by philanthropic donors, Assignment Saving Lives is a scholarship program that encourages students to recruit their peers to be the next generation of blood, plasma and stem cell donors. As our flagship program for students recruiting others to join **Canada’s Lifeline**, eligible post-secondary students can win scholarships for recruiting the highest numbers of new and returning donors.

Maghsoudi connected with his fellow international students and used social media to reach out to the broader Iranian Canadian community in Winnipeg. These efforts included creating private Telegram and WhatsApp groups to share videos and other resources about blood donation — groups that are still active and helping recruit new donors today.

“There are around 5,000 Iranians in Winnipeg, and a lot of them weren’t really aware of the importance of blood donation,” says Maghsoudi. “Others had questions or concerns of their own about donating blood. My background in medicinal chemistry allowed me to talk to people in both a scientific and a compassionate way that helped them understand the reality.”

Through his efforts, Maghsoudi was able to recruit 67 donors. The scholarship he received in recognition of his efforts was enough to support a semester’s tuition, something he says made a big difference to his mental health and his studies.

“When you don’t have to worry about how you’re going to pay your tuition, you can focus on your research,” he says. “That can make a real difference in a student’s life. I’m so thankful to those who have generously supported this funding opportunity.”

While financial donations have long supported this initiative, the Assignment Saving Lives scholarship program was previously coordinated regionally. Starting in 2024, students across Canada (not including Quebec) can participate, thanks to the generous support of our financial donors.

For Maghsoudi, winning the scholarship doesn’t mean he’ll stop recruiting donors: “Blood donation is the cornerstone of our health system and one of the most important things a person can do. A few hundred millilitres of your blood is nothing to you, but it can save up to three lives. We’re all connected to each other, so I encourage everyone to do it.”

Training the next generation of transfusion specialists



Drs. Lianne Rotin and Sheharyar Raza, transfusion medicine trainees.

For more than 20 years, Canadian Blood Services has supported physicians training in transfusion medicine with an award to cover the costs of this two-year subspecialty program — the only one of its kind in Canada. This award is helping build a community of transfusion medicine experts, many of whom have gone on to join Canadian Blood Services or become internationally renowned transfusion specialists.

In 2022, the award was renamed the Elianna Saidenberg Transfusion Medicine Traineeship Award, in honour of the late Dr. Elianna Saidenberg, a previous recipient of this award and a leader who made a deep impact on Canadian Blood Services until her passing from cancer in 2019. Dr. Saidenberg was a hematopathologist and transfusion specialist, as well as a patient-rights advocate, mentor and teacher.

In 2023, the award was granted to two recipients, Dr. Sheharyar Raza and Dr. Lianne Rotin, both hematology residents at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Raza plans to use his background in neuroscience and

data research to explore ways to increase blood donation in Canada and minimize processing errors. He believes the award will help him make a greater contribution to the field of transfusion medicine that otherwise would not have been possible.

“I’m incredibly grateful for this award,” he says. “I’m especially looking forward to researching ways for blood operators to work efficiently within broader health-care systems.”

Dr. Rotin is also keen to begin her traineeship, which will complement her research on whether immune checkpoint inhibitor drugs, often given to cancer patients, could increase the risk of their bodies rejecting a blood transfusion.

“I am most eager to build upon my immunohematology knowledge and skills,” she says.

Now funded entirely through contributions from our financial donors, the Elianna Saidenberg Transfusion Medicine Traineeship Award continues to help strengthen and sustain Canada’s blood system and in turn the health systems we support and the patients we serve.

On track together: CN and Canadian Blood Services

When Suzanne Dalzell, head of strategic partnerships at CN, received a funding application from Canadian Blood Services, she knew the fit was right because both organizations are built around connecting people and communities.

“We care about our communities and understand the positive impact we can have,” says Dalzell. “Support for Canadian Blood Services complements our support for trauma centres, cancer research and diversity initiatives.”

Dalzell was thrilled to learn CN’s donation would be used to support the Elianna Saidenberg Transfusion Medicine Traineeship Award. CN invests heavily in its own training and professional development programs and is committed to supporting the next generation of talent.

Helping fund this award is just one of the ways CN supports the work of Canadian Blood Services. In addition to making financial donations since 2008, the company runs employee blood drives through the Partners for Life program and some of its employees volunteer with Canadian Blood Services. CN also matches employee and pensioner contributions with corporate financial gifts.

“Canadian Blood Services is essential to our community,” says Dalzell. “We plan to build on this partnership and continue our support into the future.”

Initia Real Estate creates a culture of giving



Blood donor and managing broker of Initia Real Estate, Jonathan Yu.

Charitable donations have been part of Initia Real Estate’s values since its founding in 2016. But when the company’s agents expressed a desire to give back to their own communities, owner and managing broker Jonathan Yu listened — and discovered that the Canadian Blood Services Partners for Life program would be an ideal fit. The agents could clearly see the real difference their donations would make in their respective communities and beyond, while the organization’s national presence meant that all of Initia’s offices in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario could participate equally.

“I also really liked the multiple options for donations,” says Yu. “Realtors can donate financially, give blood or do both.”

Response to the program, which officially launched in August 2023, was rapid and enthusiastic. All agents are now given the option of automatically donating a portion of their commission earnings to Canadian Blood Services, with some choosing to donate as much as \$400 per commission. To encourage the agents to further grow their own business while supporting a good cause, in December the brokerage matched all donations dollar for dollar. By the end of 2023, about 40 agents had participated in the program, raising more than \$7,000. By mid-2024, 100 agents had signed up to contribute.

“We nurture some healthy competition, too,”

says Yu. “Each year at our annual Initi8 conference, we award a trophy to the realtor who donates the most money to our charity partners. For our 2023 conference, a representative from Canadian Blood Services joined us to present that trophy with me. The trophy helps build a sense of pride and incentivize further giving.”

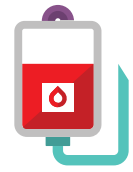
Alongside the financial donations, blood and blood product donations from agents count toward Initia’s Partners for Life team donations, which has inspired numerous agents, including Yu, to donate blood for the first time.

“It’s been really exciting talking to my colleagues, who have not only donated blood but also involved their wider circle,” says Yu. “Family, friends ... it’s so much more than just financial donations.”

Looking ahead, Yu plans to encourage further growth of the biological donation side of the Partners for Life program by raising awareness, building momentum for more blood and plasma drives and updating the trophy’s criteria to include biological donations as well as financial giving.

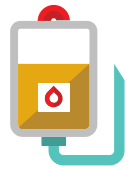
“Every time I see a Canadian Blood Services logo alongside the Initia logo on one of the ‘for sale’ signs in our neighbourhoods, I know that’s an agent donating a portion of their commissions to a greater cause,” says Yu. “It’s really gratifying to see this program gain such a strong foothold in such a short time, and it makes me really excited to continue this partnership.”

By the numbers: Our mission to help every patient, match every need and serve every Canadian



82K

first time blood donors



15K

new plasma donors



19K

new potential donors on the Canadian Blood Services Stem Cell Registry



1375

transplants facilitated through the National Organ Waitlist (NOW) program.

The number of first-time donors recruited every year helps illustrate the impact of our efforts to keep **Canada's Lifeline** strong. Our financial supporters also play a role in this work by fuelling investments that help us build awareness and recruit more biological donors so these numbers can increase year after year.

Blood and plasma

To continue meeting the needs of patients across Canada, we must attract 100,000 first-time blood and plasma donors every year. Financial donations to the areas of blood and plasma help us go above and beyond in our recruitment efforts and can also give us a boost in times when more first-time donors are especially needed.

Stem cells

People are more likely to find a stem cell match with a donor of similar ancestral or ethnic background. However, only 25 per cent of people find a stem cell match within their own family. Currently, people who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, Hispanic or of mixed-race heritage collectively make up only about one-third of registrants. This is why it is so important to increase the number of potential stem cell donors joining the registry every year. Financial donations to the area of stem cells help us find new ways to raise awareness of this important need and reduce social barriers that may prevent people from getting involved.

Organs and tissues

Approximately 4,400 Canadians are waiting for a lifesaving organ or tissue transplant — but not everyone in need of a vital organ will receive one. Last year, 1,375 transplants were facilitated through the National Organ Waitlist, which Canadian Blood Services helps to manage. With continued investment in organs and tissues from generous financial donors and others, we will strengthen our role within the broader organ and tissue donation and transplantation community to improve national system performance.

Ways to customize your giving



Alicia, blood recipient, financial donor and Partners for Life member

Save lives with an online gift

Visit give.blood.ca/donate to make your financial donation or call 613-739-2339.

Give the gift of securities

Make an immediate impact and enhance your tax benefits by donating publicly traded securities.

Donate with a group

Rally your friends, family and community to help save lives by starting a Partners for Life team at blood.ca/pfl and an accompanying fundraising page at give.blood.ca/fundraise.

Celebrate a birthday, anniversary or milestone

Mark a special occasion by making a financial gift to help patients in need at give.blood.ca/honour.

Donate your honorarium

If you're a sought-after speaker, you can direct your honorarium to support lifesaving programs and initiatives.

Amplify impact with corporate matching

Find out whether your employer will match your charitable contributions, facilitate charitable payroll deductions or honour your volunteer work or blood and plasma donations with a corporate gift at give.blood.ca/employermatch.

Become a monthly donor

Help connect patients with the life essentials they need year-round, by becoming a monthly financial donor at give.blood.ca/monthly.

Honour a loved one

Pay tribute to the life of someone special in a meaningful way, with a gift in memory or in honour of that special someone at give.blood.ca/memory.

Create a lasting impact

After you've taken care of your loved ones, contemplate leaving a gift to Canadian Blood Services in your will. Learn more at give.blood.ca/legacy.

give.blood.ca

1 888 2 DONATE | 613.739.2339

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