

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Winter Storms, Frigid temperatures keep blood donors away and cost New York Blood Center thousands of lost blood donations.

New York Blood Center announces blood emergency appeal for donors

NEW YORK – Winter storms, frigid temperatures and wide spread flu are making it harder for New York and New Jersey communities to maintain their critical blood supply.

Cancelled blood drives and reduced donor turnout throughout January have resulted in substantially fewer blood donations than what is needed to meet the needs of patients in the hospitals served by New York Blood Center.

"Each winter storm further reduces our region's blood supply," said Andrea H. Cerafelli, Senior Executive Director Donor Recruitment and Marketing at New York Blood Center. "With blood levels at critical lows, we are urging everyone who can to take one hour to donate one unit to save one life this weekend."

The blood supply typically drops during the colder months, but this year's drop-off is worse than expected. Donations are thousands below what is needed to maintain an ideal 6-7 day supply of blood. Currently, New York Blood Center has just a 3-4 day supply with types O- and B- at critically low levels.

Donated blood is perishable and hospitals must have access to a continuous supply to ensure that all patients can receive the life-saving blood they need when it counts. Platelets— a component of blood that's especially important for cancer patients—are in particularly high demand because they have a five-day shelf life.

Those who would like to donate can visit www.nybloodcenter.org to find a nearby donation center or mobile unit. It only takes one hour to donate, and a single donation can save multiple lives. Those in need include: cancer patients, accident, burn, or trauma victims, newborn babies and their mothers, transplant recipients, surgery patients, chronically transfused patients suffering from sickle cell disease or thalassemia, and many more.

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About New York Blood Center: Founded in 1964, New York Blood Center (NYBC) is a nonprofit organization that is one of the largest independent, community-based blood centers in the world. NYBC, along with its partner organizations Community Blood Center of Kansas City, Missouri (CBC), Innovative Blood Resources (IBR), Blood Bank of Delmarva (BBD), and Rhode Island Blood Center (RIBC), collect approximately 4,000 units of blood products each day and

serve local communities of more than 45 million people in the Tri-State area (NY, NJ, CT), Mid Atlantic area (PA, DE, MD), the Kansas City metropolitan area, Minnesota, Nebraska, Rhode Island, and Southern New England. NYBC and its partners also provide a wide array of transfusion-related medical services, including Comprehensive Cell Solutions, the National Center for Blood Group Genomics, the National Cord Blood Program, and the Lindsley F. Kimball Research Institute, which — among other milestones — developed the Hepatitis B vaccine and a patented solvent detergent plasma process innovating blood-purification technology worldwide.

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