

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2020

NEW YORK BLOOD CENTER EXPANDS CAPACITY AT DONORS CENTERS; URGES HEALTHY DONORS TO SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS TO MAINTAIN BLOOD SUPPLY AT THIS CRITICAL TIME

New York Blood Center reminds community that donating is safe and essential

NEW YORK – New York Blood Center (NYBC) is extending open hours at its donor centers and urging healthy donors to make appointments to help maintain the region’s blood supply at this critical time.

“Around 75% of our incoming blood supply was interrupted when schools, businesses and religious institutions closed due to the coronavirus outbreak. In response, we’ve increased capacity at our donor centers by extending hours and opening for extra days each week. These modifications will provide controlled, safe environments for healthy donors. By quickly implementing this sustainable long-term solution we have worked to prevent our blood supply from dropping to dangerously low levels,” said Christopher D. Hillyer, MD, President and CEO of New York Blood Center.

Blood is perishable and the supply must be continually replenished. NYBC operates 19 donor centers across New York and New Jersey. Donors can schedule appointments by calling 1-800-933-2566 or visiting nybc.org/coronavirus.

Blood collection sites are disinfected frequently, and we are taking extra precautions to help prevent the person-to-person spread of COVID-19 as per CDC recommendations. NYBC staff are also practicing health self-assessments prior to presenting at work. As always, people are not eligible to donate if they’re experiencing a cold, sore throat, respiratory infection or flu-like symptoms.

In order to protect our staff, healthy blood donors and our community blood supply, people must avoid donor centers if they are experiencing a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing), have had close contact with someone diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19 in the last 14 days, or been diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19 until 28 days after their illness has resolved. NYBC does NOT test for COVID-19.

It only takes one hour to donate, and a single donation can be used to save multiple lives. About one in seven hospital admissions requires a blood transfusion. 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.

Additional information is available at nybc.org/coronavirus.

#

Contact: Jennifer Barden, Jennifer@risaheller.com, (646) 676-4486

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 operating divisions 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 75 million people in the Tri-State area (NY, NJ, CT), Mid Atlantic area (PA, DE, MD, VA), Missouri and Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Rhode Island, and Southern New England. NYBC and its operating divisions also provide a wide array of transfusion-related medical services to over 500 hospitals nationally, 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 a practical screening method for hepatitis B as well as a safe, effective and affordable vaccine, and a patented solvent detergent plasma process innovating blood-purification technology worldwide.