



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release – December 6, 2022

RE: Choosing Blood Wisely Designation

Napanee, ON – The Lennox and Addington County General Hospital (LACGH) has been recognized as a Choosing Blood Wisely Hospital by Choosing Wisely Canada and Canadian Blood Services for meeting national appropriateness benchmarks for red blood cell transfusions.

This national achievement symbolises the Hospital's commitment to red blood cell stewardship and continuous quality improvement. The recognition also showcases the Hospital's leadership and ongoing efforts towards conservation and sustainability.

LACGH is among a select group of Hospitals that is making a difference for patients, donor's and Canada's blood supply. Dr. Pierre Robichaud, Acute Care Medical Director, and Dr. Nicola Matthew, Internal Medicine Medical Director, share, "we are proud to be following best practices to maximize the benefit of blood transfusions - a limited and precious healthcare resource." Now more than ever, we have come to understand that appropriate use of finite resources, including the supply of blood, is an essential part of safe and high-quality care.



Reducing unnecessary transfusions minimizes the possibility of developing antibodies that would make finding compatible units of blood harder to locate which could potentially delay future emergency transfusions. Transfusion reactions, although uncommon, are also reduced when unnecessary transfusions are eliminated.

The LACGH laboratory initiated the Choosing Blood Wisely quality improvement project in April 2021. The improvement team began the process of educating care team members on transfusion best practices and began reporting statistics to Canadian Blood Services. The simple change of repeat hemoglobin testing after the first blood unit transfused to monitor how each patient responds has drastically reduced the number of patients that receive more than one unit of packed red blood cells. The education for this change was enabled by Dr. Jeannie Callum, Kingston Health Sciences Center. As LACGH's transfusion specialist, she supported the Choosing wisely project and commonly consults with LACGH for complex transfusion cases.

“The path to achieving our choosing blood wisely designation was truly a collaborative one. It required sustained efforts from multiple groups including Laboratory, Nursing, Management, I.T., and Physicians” comments Dr. Robichaud. Pam Hodgen, Laboratory Charge Technologist adds that “by reducing the number of units we transfuse we not only make transfusion safer for patients, we also reduce healthcare costs and unnecessary laboratory testing. Working together with the various departments has helped achieve this prestigious goal. Way to go team!”



Photo 1 (pictured Left to Right): Dr. Nicola Matthews – Medical Director, Internal Medicine / Marie-France Paradis – Manager, Clinical Informatics and Clerical Services / Pam Hodgen – Charge Technologist, Laboratory / Diane Makin, Medical Laboratory Technologist / Dr. Pierre Robichaud – Medical Director, Acute Care

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About LACGH:

The Lennox and Addington County General Hospital is a fully accredited acute care hospital situated in the heart of Lennox and Addington County and surrounding townships. The hospital’s emphasis on general medicine and general surgery reflects its role in providing core services. The hospital currently operates 52 beds: 24 active care, 2 palliative care, 4 intensive care and 22 long-

term care beds. LACGH emergency department operates 24 hours a day and provides care services to an excess of 26,000 patients per year.

Our mission is to be a progression rural health system, dedicated to improving the health of our patients and our communities. Our state of the art facility provides the equipment that permits us to maintain and enhance our services now and into the future.