

Board meeting minutes

Date	Sept. 17, 2024	Session type	Closed
Chair	Dr. Brian Postl	Recording secretary	Kelsey Stewart
Attendees	<p>Board: Bob Adkins, Marilyn Barrett, Kelly Butt, Dr. Catherine Cook, Bobby Kwon, Anne McFarlane, David Morhart, Dr. Roona Sinha, Donnie Wing, Glenda Yeates</p> <p>Executive management team: Dr. Graham Sher (Chief Executive Officer), Judie Leach Bennett (Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Risk Officer), Jennifer Camelon (Chief Financial Officer and Vice President, Corporate Services), Jody Faught (Vice President, Supply Chain), Dr. Isra Levy (Vice President, Medical Affairs and Innovation), Andrew Pateman (Vice President, People Culture and Performance), Richard Smith (Vice President, Digital Solutions and Technology), Elizabeth Stucker (Vice President, Collections), Dr. Eloise Tan (Vice President, Inclusion, Sustainability and Engagement), Ron Vezina (Vice President, Donor Engagement and Corporate Reputation)</p>		
Guests	Ali Ahmed, Catherine Butler, Ashley Haugh, Caitlin Jones, Cathy Jones, Peggy John, Sarah Lynch, Sterling Lynch, Lindy McIntyre, Alana Robertson, Everad Tilokee, Priyank Tyagi, Dr. Kathryn Webert		
Regrets	David Lehberg, Judy Steele		

1. Call to order and land acknowledgement (B. Postl)

B. Postl, Chair, called the meeting to order and made a land acknowledgement.

2. Approval of agenda (B. Postl)

After review, **ON MOTION** duly made and seconded, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

3. Declaration of conflict of interest (B. Postl)

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4. Patient story (G. Sher)

E. Tilokee, a Canadian Blood Services employee, joined the board meeting to share his story as a heart failure patient, a heart transplant recipient, and a Canadian Transplant Games participant.

5. Chair's opening remarks (B. Postl)

The chair provided the following updates:

- The corporate plan was submitted to the provinces and territories on July 31, 2024, and subsequent meetings are taking place with senior provincial and territorial officials.
- Canadian Blood Services continues to monitor the investigation of a cluster of a potential neurological syndrome of unknown cause in New Brunswick. The matter was also reviewed at the safety, research, and ethics committee last week.
- Individual touch base meetings will be scheduled between board members and the board chair over the fall.

6. Consent agenda (B. Postl)

After review, **ON MOTION** duly made and seconded, the consent agenda was approved.

6.1 Approval of the minutes – June 20, 2024 (closed), June 21, 2024 (open)

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the board approves the minutes of the June 20, 2024 closed meeting and the June 21, 2024 open meeting.

6.2 Enterprise risk management - quarterly report, assessment overview

The board received the quarterly corporate risk report. The quarterly report provides a summary of the status of the key risks to the organization's strategic and business objectives.

The board received an overview of the approach to the corporate risk profile, rationale for the risk presented, and context around utilization to advance dialogue and actions required to address potential risks.

6.3 Quarterly information technology update

The board received an update regarding IT operations, key enterprise projects, risks and emerging issues, and information security.

6.4 Enterprise facility asset management

The board received an update on the enterprise facility asset management (EFAM) transformational initiatives and investment programs.

6.5 Director and officer appointments

The board approved the following resolution relating to the officers' appointments:

WHEREAS there were changes to the executive management team of Canadian Blood Services in June 2024.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

In addition to the board chair and the vice chair, the officers of the corporation are confirmed as:

1. Dr. Graham Sher, Chief Executive Officer
2. Judie Leach Bennett, Vice President (Secretary of the corporation)
3. Jennifer Camelon, Chief Financial Officer and Vice President
4. Dr. Christian Choquet, Vice President
5. Jody Faught, Vice President
6. Dr. Isra Levy, Vice President
7. Andrew Pateman, Vice President
8. Richard Smith, Vice President
9. Elizabeth Stucker, Vice President
10. Dr. Eloise Tan, Vice President
11. Ron Vezina, Vice-President

7. 2022-2023 Alliance of Blood Operators (ABO) benchmarking highlights (G. Sher, J. Camelon, J. Faught, A. Ahmed, S. Lynch, A. Robertson)

The board received a presentation with an overview of key results from the 2022-2023 Alliance of Blood Operators' benchmarking and cost model reports, which show how Canadian Blood Services compares to its international peers across various performance metrics.

Highlights of the topics presented included:

- Overview.
- ABO collaboration forums.
- 2022-2023 ABO benchmarking report: highlights, red blood cell issues, new donors, plasma for fractionation, source plasma programs, productivity for collections, manufacturing, and testing, as well as ABO benchmarking priorities for this year.

- 2022-2023 ABO cost model report: highlights, costing for red blood cells, plasma for fractionation, and platelets, as well as targeted opportunity (labour & consumables), and cost model priorities for this year.
- Other topics for awareness: growing red blood cell demand, cybersecurity, supply chain vulnerabilities, and malaria testing.
- Additional ABO priorities for the year.

Discussions included:

- Canadian Blood Services actively engages in international collaboration as a member of the Alliance of Blood Operators (ABO). All ABO blood operators use a non-remunerated donor model.
- The ABO board, which is comprised of the Chief Executive Officers from each member organization, meets frequently throughout the year to advance collaboration at the highest level. Accreditation is outside the realm of the ABO.
- The ABO conducts extensive analysis to understand the supply and demand dynamics of the global market. Joint supply chain, consumable and procurement programs exist and there is more opportunity to expand in this area.
- Australia and the Netherlands have large mature plasma collection programs with many multi-product sites. A deep dive of collection productivity will take place to gain insights and learnings on their system and methods. As Canadian Blood Services implements and expands the multiproduct model, productivity is expected to increase. Likewise, Canadian Blood Services as a leader in manufacturing productivity will be sharing its journey with other operators.
- Work continues to expand data and analytics inputs into ABO reporting, e.g., immunoglobulin benchmarking per capita, and provide reporting more quickly. As much as possible, input factors are neutralized to provide comparisons across operators, but with different, prescribing practices, utilization, levels of disease types, etc. across countries there are some limits.
- Provinces and territories pay for plasma protein and related product costs based on utilization, which is outside the control of Canadian Blood Services. As the organization's data and analytic capabilities expand, further utilization trends and benchmarks can be shared with the PTs related to PPRP utilization.

- There are various financial models across countries with some being more complex such as the case with Canadian Blood Services while other models include multi-year and multiproduct options.
- The cost for marketing and donor recruitment are areas of interest for comparison. Learnings can be achieved by unpacking increases in spend and programs offered.

8. Utilization management of blood and blood products (I. Levy, C. Jones, C. Jones, L. McIntyre, K. Weber)

The board received an education session overviewing utilization management of blood and blood products in Canada, including the role Canadian Blood Services plays and future opportunities to optimize utilization management.

Highlights of the topics presented included:

- What utilization management is and its importance.
- The essential utilization management activities: resource optimization, patient optimization activities, education, guideline development and implementation, audits and feedback, benchmarking, patient blood management (PBM), and programs to prioritize use of products.
- Current Canadian Blood Services projects offering future opportunity: distribution modernization project, special authorization program, pharmacist in hemophilia treatment centres, national immunoglobulin shortages plan, and data initiatives.

Discussions included:

- The Area of Focused Competence (AFC)-diploma program in transfusion medicine is a subspecialty residency training program accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada administered at three Canadian universities and heavily supported by Canadian Blood Services, financially and in kind. The goal of this program is to support physicians in Canada to get training in transfusion medicine through exposure to the work carried out in Canadian Blood Services centres and hospital transfusion services. The program also includes a lecture series and teaching carried out by Canadian Blood Services physicians, scientists, and staff as well as hospital transfusion medicine faculty. Furthermore, Canadian Blood Services' medical and scientific staff are actively involved in the teaching of transfusion medicine residents as well as residents in internal medicine, hematology, pathology, anesthesia, family medicine, and various surgical specialties. This program is essential because physicians

who complete transfusion medicine fellowships will go on to champion appropriate utilization of blood products in the future. Almost all the trainees who have completed this program are currently in positions of transfusion medicine leadership in Canada.

- With PPRP usage increasing, there will continue to be a focus on utilization management. With PT support, Canadian Blood Services can play a role in optimizing utilization management.
- Canadian Blood Services has provided benchmarking reports called “[BloodBriefs](#)” which aimed to promote optimal utilization of blood components and products by heightening hospital awareness of issue trends over time and comparison to other hospitals. These benchmarking reports are evolving and will be available in the hospital portal for continued collaboration.
- The PTs are watching Canadian Blood Services’ PPRP distribution modernization project being piloted in Alberta with a specialty pharmacy distributing two PPRP products. It ensures clinical oversight for dispensing, facilitates home delivery, and collects data to monitor usage to allow for effective enforcement of provincial listing criteria. It also has shown how easy it is to add additional products to distribution with the addition of Glassia as the second product in the pilot. With continued successful outcomes, additional PTs will likely look to add this service in their jurisdiction.

9. Organ and Tissue Donation & Transplantation (OTDT) (I. Levy, C. Butler, P. John, S. Lynch, L. McIntyre)

The board received an update on organ donation and transplantation rates, the new governance framework for organ donation and transplantation health care services in Canada, and the continued evolution of the Canadian Transplant Registry and the interprovincial organ sharing registries it supports.

Highlights of the topics presented included:

- Organ donation and transplantation rates.
- Governance for organ donation and transplantation.
- Evolving the Canadian Transplant Registry.
- Evolving registries for interprovincial organ sharing.
- Next steps.

Discussions included:

- On April 12, 2024, the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health approved a pan-Canadian organ donation and transplantation governance framework. Canadian Blood Services will play a key role in governance as the national coordinating body for OTDT in Canada and as the permanent co-chair and secretariat of the system operators advisory committee. Quebec is an active member of the OTDT work at Canadian Blood Services and will be participating as an observer for the organ donation transplantation collaborative (ODTC).
- Since the inception of Health Canada launching ODTC in 2018, Canadian Blood Services has been collaborating with the provincial and territorial (PT) health officials (except Quebec), to bring together patients, families, clinicians, researchers and administrators from across the country to work together to identify high-impact opportunities to improve patient outcomes and Canada's performance in organ donation and transplantation. One of the ODTC's key objectives was to develop a governance framework to support the identification and implementation of pan-national priorities.
- Currently there is a program in each province that coordinates the organ donation and transplantation matches which meets the needs for most cases in each individual jurisdiction. The Canadian Transplant registry run by Canadian Blood Services enhances this work by finding matches for medically urgent or highly sensitized patients that require a broader search across Canada.

10. Employee demographic and inclusion results (E. Tan, P. Tyagi)

The board received the organizational inclusion scores from the 2023 employee demographic and inclusion survey.

Discussions included:

- There is some overlap of themes / concepts between the employee demographic and inclusion survey and previous employee experience (EX) surveys – e.g., the theme of career development. Some of this is due to the survey tool / questions used by the vendor which is based on research and has backing from academia and allows for comparisons across their database of clients. Some may be a similar “theme” name, but the questions are getting at a different aspect of career development - e.g., whether someone of influence is invested in the employee's growth and/or development. The intersection of this area of focus between the employee demographic and inclusion survey as well as the employee experience survey will be important to understand.

- Divisions where frontline are concentrated (Supply Chain, Plasma, Medical and Innovation (MAI)) report the lowest inclusion scores. This is in keeping with results seen from EX surveys as well as compared to other organizations with a mix of unionized and non-unionized roles.
- The organization's inclusion score is 59 out of 100. The score is calculated using Diversio's (the survey vendor) proprietary algorithm which uses the following metrics as inputs: inclusive culture, fair management, career development, workplace flexibility, and workplace safety. An inclusion score of 59 for an organization of Canadian Blood Services' size and composition is comparable to scores within other industries, particularly for an organization at an early stage of its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) journey. Canadian Blood Services will continue to analyze the results and put action plans in place to increase the inclusion score.

11. Committee reports

11.1 Finance and audit (D. Wing)

D. Wing, Vice Chair of the finance and audit committee, provided an update on committee activities, including that the committee:

- Reviewed the financial results for the quarter ended June 30, 2024.
- Reviewed the corporate plan follow up on financing options.
- Received an update on Grifols activities.
- Reviewed the contracting approach for Edmonton operations centre.
- Reviewed significant procurement contracts.
- Received an update on the enterprise facility asset management.
- Reviewed the internal audit report.
- Received updates on the pension plans (Defined Contributions, Defined Benefits and Executive).
- Reviewed agreements for board notification.
- Received the external auditor evaluation.
- Reviewed the committee risk report.

11.2 Safety, research, and ethics (A. McFarlane)

A. McFarlane, Chair of the safety, research, and ethics committee, provided an update on committee activities, including that the committee:

- Received the ethicist's annual report.
- Received updates of the research ethics board (REB).
- Received an update on the donor selection criteria.
- Received an update on the alternative to using the current blood bags containing plasticizer DEHP.
- Received quarterly team updates.
- Received an update on emerging pathogens and surveillance activities.
- Received an update on quality and compliance which showed all operations were in a state of control.
- Reviewed the committee's terms of reference (ToR).
- Reviewed the committee risk report.

11.3 Talent management (B. Kwon)

B. Kwon, Chair of the talent management committee, provided an update on committee activities, including that the committee:

- Received an update on the results from the organization's 2023 demographic and inclusion employee survey.
- Received a presentation from compensation consultants from Mercer who are overseeing a governance and effectiveness review of the Canadian Blood Services executive compensation program.
- Received the final deliverables from the CEO succession work performed by Egon Zehnder in 2020 and 2021.
- Received the quarterly talent dashboard.
- Reviewed the committee risk report.

11.4 Governance (D. Morhart)

D. Morhart, Chair of the governance committee, provided an update on committee activities, including that the committee:

- Continued discussions regarding the oversight of significant transformation initiatives (donor base growth strategy, digital and physical infrastructure renewal, etc.).
- Is continuing its review of the terms of reference for the four board standing committees.
- Endorsed the amended skills matrix for the 2025 director recruitment cycle.
- Received an update on progress and upcoming activities to continually improve and mature the enterprise risk management (ERM) program.
- Continued discussion regarding board email address use for Canadian Blood Services board related business.
- Reviewed the board quarterly digital solutions and technology update.
- Received an update on system governance effectiveness activities.
- Received regular updates regarding safe reporting activity; feedback on the June 2024 meeting; annual review of the board agenda/material; board education record, and planning for the 2025 board retreat.
- Reviewed the committee risk report.
- Endorsed the 2023-2024 sustainability report which will be made public following the annual general meeting in late fall 2024.
- Approved updates to the POL029 – Enterprise risk management policy v.6.0

Discussions included:

- Board meetings scheduled when an open board meeting is taking place will be extended to include an additional half day of meeting time (previously were one day meetings) before the open board meeting.

11.5 Consumer directors (B. Adkins)

B. Adkins, consumer director, shared that the next set of patient engagement forum meetings will be held in November and a report on the meetings will be provided at the December board meeting.

Board members who are interested in learning more about the patient engagement forum can reach out to B. Adkins or D. Lehberg.

11.6 CBS Insurance Company Ltd (CBSI) (G. Yeates)

G. Yeates, Chair of CBSI, provided an update on recent activities:

- Received regular business reports, including financial statements and investment reports. Key CBSI performance metrics were reviewed and there were no areas of concern noted.
- Received a report from the investment advisor, Concord, on performance of the investment portfolio and an overview of the global fixed income portion of the investments.
- Received a presentation regarding cyber insurance.
- Received an analysis of premium net assets, including scenario modelling, to assist the board in its decision making about the allocation of premium net assets for risk management purposes.
- Provided feedback on the proposed Risk Financing for Risk Management Initiatives Policy, regarding criteria for the application of risk financing to risk management initiatives which will reduce the risk exposure of both the insured (Canadian Blood Services) and the insurer (CBSI).

11.6.1 CBSI quarterly report

The Canadian Blood Services board received the CBSI quarterly report.

ON MOTION duly made and seconded, it was agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m. ET on Sept. 17, 2024.

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