
The Honourable Ginette Petitpas-Taylor, PC, MP
Minister of Health of Canada
70 Colombine Driveway
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0K9
hcminister.ministresc@canada.ca



December 13, 2018

Dear Minister Ginette Petitpas-Taylor:

I am writing on behalf of the Blood for Life Club at Simon Fraser University in support of changing the current Canadian Blood Services deferral policy on men who have sex with men (MSM) from a one year waiting period from last sexual contact to a three-month waiting period. We believe that this change in policy is a positive step that can be safely adopted.

Our club consists of a group of passionate student leaders from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. We collectively work to raise awareness about the importance of blood donation among on our university's campuses in Greater Vancouver. Having participated in consultations around the MSM policy, we are proud to have brought the voices and concerns of the students we interact with to the table. We brought to these consultations the voices that told us that the current policy creates a culture of discrimination and oppression. At these same consultations, we received all of the information that we require in supporting the request to change the current MSM policy. Once implemented, we would expect research and surveillance to continue in potentially altering deferral to a gender-neutral screening policy.

These consultations processes increased our comfort level in supporting Canadian Blood Services in their recruitment efforts. We also believe that this proposed policy change is aligned with the government's evidence-based approach and its emphasis on the importance of scientific research.

The future of the blood supply depends on the support and trust of Canada's youth. We see this change as a safe and timely step that can positively impact the younger generation's reaction to donating blood.

Thank you for your considerations.

Sincerely,

Iman Baharmand
Executive Director, SFU Blood for Life Student Club

Cc:

Simon Kennedy, Deputy Minister, Health Canada: Simon.kennedy@canada.ca
and **Pierre Sabourin**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Products and Food Branch (HPFB) Health Canada: Pierre.sabourin@canada.ca and **Cathy Parker**, Acting Director General, Biologics & Genetic Therapies Directorate, (HPFB) Health Canada: Cathy.parker@canada.ca and **Dr. Graham Sher**, CEO, Canadian Blood Services (graham.sher@blood.ca) and **Don Lapierre** (don.lapierre@blood.ca) at Canadian Blood Services.