

Black Community Urged to Support Local Patients

By Canadian Blood Services | Published 02/1/2008

Black History Month celebrated at blood donor clinic

Brampton, February 2008 – Canadian Blood Services and United Achievers Community Services of Peel are inviting African-Canadians to donate blood and learn about registering with the OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network as a part of their Black History Month activities.

A special Black History Month blood donor clinic will be held on Monday, February 4, 2008, from 4:00 to 8:00 pm at Chris Gibson Recreation Centre, 125 McLaughlan Road. All members of the community are welcome to attend. Prospective donors are encouraged to call 1-888-2-DONATE to book their appointment.

Caryna Wilding, Clinic Recruitment Coordinator with Canadian Blood Services says, "Some diseases such as Sickle Cell Disease are more prevalent among the Black community and the best blood donors for such patients share similar racial backgrounds." She adds, "We need to build a blood donor base that is more ethnically and racially diverse so we can better serve patients at our region's hospitals."

MaryLynn Pride, Coordinator, Donor Management of the OneMatch Network agrees, "We're counting on the generosity of African Canadians to help us increase the OneMatch Network and improve our ability to help these patients."

The OneMatch Network is responsible for matching donors to patients who require stem cell and bone marrow transplants. African-Canadians make up a small portion of the Canadian blood donor base and only 0.5% are registered with OneMatch. More are needed so that tissue types common to the Black population are available to patients. Information about the OneMatch program will be at the clinic.

Sickle Cell and Stem Cell

Sickle Cell Disease is a life-threatening, inherited disorder that affects the normal functioning of the red blood cells. It occurs predominantly in Black people, and causes anemia; jaundice; damage to the lungs, kidney and spleen; acute pain; and strokes. There is no cure for Sickle Cell disease, but good medical care, including blood transfusions, can help manage and prevent the pain and serious complications of the disease.

Stem cell transplants are used to treat patients with a variety of diseases, including leukemia, aplastic anemia and immune system disorders.

About The United Achievers Community Services of Peel

Founded by the United Achievers Club of Brampton, The United Achievers Community Services of Peel (UACS) is a non-profit organization primarily serving the African Caribbean community. UACS is committed to strengthening and enhancing the quality of

life of families and individuals by providing culturally sensitive preventive social programs, support, resources, education and training.

About Canadian Blood Services

Canadian Blood Services is a national not-for-profit charitable organization that manages the blood supply in all Canadian provinces and territories (except Québec) and oversees OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network. A dedicated team of 4,800 staff and 17,000 volunteers enable Canadian Blood Services to operate 40 permanent collection sites and more than 20,000 donor clinics annually. While Canadian Blood Services is a non-governmental organization, it receives operational funding from the Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health, and is regulated by Health Canada.