

Osler celebrates two years as GTA's collection site for Canadian Blood Services' Cord Blood Bank

Last month marked the second anniversary since public cord blood collections began at William Osler Health System's Brampton Civic Hospital.

Brampton Civic is the only hospital in the GTA, as well as the only community hospital in Canada, selected to serve as a collection site for Canadian Blood Services' Cord Blood Bank. In July 2014, Brampton Civic began collecting umbilical cord blood which may be used to treat patients requiring a stem cell transplant.

"We are pleased to be working with Canadian Blood Services on this important initiative and have had significant participation from our generous community since we launched as a collection site two years ago," said Osler's Executive Vice-President of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Executive Joanne Flewwelling. "With over 2,000 cord blood units donated to date, we are proud of our efforts to help diversify the cord blood bank supply and match more patients with life-saving stem cell treatments."

Hundreds of patients are in need of unrelated stem cell donors at any given time. And only 50 per cent are able to find a match. This can be even more challenging in ethnically diverse areas, making collection efforts at Brampton Civic, which serves a growing and diverse community, very important.

In fiscal year 2015-16, Brampton Civic had more than 1,500 consents, and over 1,000 cord blood units collected. Over the past two years, Brampton Civic has cumulatively collected 75 per cent non-Caucasian and 25 per cent Caucasian cord blood units. To date, the hospital has collected more than 2,000 cord blood units.

"We would like to thank William Osler Health System for the support and contributions to cord blood banking, collections and recruitment over the past two years," said Dr. Heidi Elmoazzen, director of cord blood bank and stem cell manufacturing at Canadian Blood Services. "The diversity of collections at Brampton Civic Hospital clearly supports our emphasis to build an ethnically diverse, public cord blood bank and to provide additional transplant opportunities for patients in Canada and around the world."

Collection efforts at Brampton Civic have the potential to help patients in need of stem cell transplants in Canada and around the world. Soon to be moms can talk to their doctor, midwife or nurse to learn more about donating their babies' umbilical cord blood. To learn more about donating cord blood and how it can help save lives, please visit www.blood/cordblood.ca