

KINS Community Comment 5/3/13

This is John Gullam from the Northern California Community Blood Bank with a Community Comment on KINS.

Each year High School and College students in Humboldt and Del Norte counties contribute over 17% of the blood and blood products collected to meet the needs of patients.

Blood drives are scheduled during the school year from August through the end of May and are among our most efficient and productive drives.

Once the school year is out, however, these reliable, consistent donors disappear, for summer vacation or for the next chapter in their lives.

What this means to the Blood Center is a 17% drop in collections, a 17% gap in our ability to meet the needs of the patients we serve. The equivalent of canceling 11 blood drives a month!

As you can imagine this is a tremendous gap to close, and we need your help to do it.

The way we will manage this issue is with a full schedule of blood drives and Donor Center hours that present nearly 100 opportunities to replace the 170 donations we stand to lose each month. That's 1.7 donors per blood drive or 5 donors a day. We can do that.

Another issue we face throughout the year is maintaining a consistent flow of donations each week and each month. We maintain an inventory of blood products at all times because to wait for a need to arise before collecting that blood doesn't work. The unit of Red Cells or Platelets that will be transfused today were drawn 2 or more days ago. It is often said in blood banking that the most precious blood type is the one you don't have.

Blood donors in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties are tremendously generous individuals who respond when we call, who donate when they are asked. However in any given year, 2,500 of these generous individuals will become ineligible to donate and we need to identify people who will step in to take their place. If you have never donated, or if it has been a while, please visit our website at www.nccbb.org or call us at 443-8004 to find a blood drive near you or let us answer any questions you may have.

It's the responsibility of all of us to be sure that we are prepared when blood components are needed in our community.

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