

The Catholic Women's League of Canada



Antigonish Diocesan Council

Ignite Your Passion, Empower His Mission

TO: Parish Council Catholic Women's League (CWL) Social Justice Chairs
FROM: Diocesan Social Justice Chair Denise Forgeron
DATE: January 21 2026
SUBJECT: Action: Resolution 2025.01 Provision of a Blood Donation Service for the CBRM
MEMO: # 5 (2024-2026)
CC: Parish Council Presidents, Diocesan Officers, Life Members, Provincial Secretary (for distribution to provincial counterpart)

The Antigonish Diocesan Council of the CWL of Canada and parish CWL councils (representing 1,300+ members) across eastern Nova Scotia have sent letters to urge Canadian Blood Services (CBS) to provide a blood donation service in the CBRM. Our resolution has been adopted by the NS provincial council and shared by our national council with all provincial councils across Canada.

We thank you for signing a petition, letters to SaltWire, and your letters written to CBS, municipal councillors, provincial MLAs, the Minister of Health and Wellness, and Premier Tim Houston as we developed the resolution and sought a blood donor service for this area.

Now the steps of 'Action on the Resolution' are taking place: We have

- sent new letters, with a copy of the 2025 resolution, to the CEO of CBS and to their various board and executive members;
- sent letters, with the resolution, to community groups throughout the CBRM asking for their support;
- sent a letter, with the resolution, to CBRM Mayor Cecil Clarke asking for support; met with Mayor Clarke. Mr. Mayor sent a letter to CBS and received a response (Thank you);
- presented to the CBRM Council resulting in a CBRM Resolution (moved by Councillor Steve Parsons/seconded by Councillor Eldon MacDonald) for supportive letters to be sent to the NS Premier and NS Minister of Health and Wellness. (A video and minutes of the CBRM council meeting January 20 2PM are online at <https://www.cbrm.ns.ca/cbrm-meetings-and-minutes.html> -scroll down to table Jan 20 2026, agenda includes our PowerPoint presentation, our written resolution for a blood donor clinic is in item 3.1, and in the right column you can see the video of provincial and diocesan members presenting to Mayor Clarke and council.)
- The NS Provincial Council will next be contacting local NS MLAs and MPs, Minister of Health and Wellness, and Premier Houston.

We need your help. As a council and as members/constituents/ citizens/parishioners **please write letters again to politicians and spread the word** to parishioners and community groups that **we need help**. To get started, we have attached a draft of a letter that can be sent to CBS. You may copy the letter "as is" and include your handwritten paragraph, or you may use this as a guide to write your own personal letter. As a constituent, or a citizen of Canada, state you urge them to hold at least one mobile clinic in the CBRM this year. Be sure to request a response and include your signature, printed name, and address. No postage is required if sent to MPs at the Ottawa Parliament. Hand deliver or send (with postage) to your local MLA. Record the date and to whom you sent the letter(s) and inform your executive. Save the responses which may be used by council(s). Your council executive records the topic, number of letters sent to each level of government or group, and responses in their Annual Report.

CBS is regulated by Health Canada through the federal Food and Drugs Act and funded federally for their role in research, development, organ and tissue donation and transplantation. Most financial support for CBS is provided by the provincial and territorial governments. Current provincial health ministers serve as corporate members, appoint the board of directors, and approve annual budgets and corporate plans. NS is the Lead Province for CBS for 2025-2027.

You are part of the Action on this year's Resolution. Thank you.

Dr. Graham Sher, CEO Canadian Blood Services
1800 Alta Vista Drive Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 4J5

Dear Canadian Blood Services CEO Dr. Graham Sher;

Regarding: Resolution 2025.01 Provision of a Blood Donation Service in Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), Nova Scotia

We are a people who are known to advocate for Education and Health. In May 2025, CBS announced its most ambitious recruitment campaign ever—one million new donors over the next five years. That's an increase of donors from 100,000 per year as requested in 2023 to approximately 200,000 per year in 2025. Well, **we want to help** and do our part. CBS has made frequent public appeals for blood donations (even advertisements on National Hockey and news channels).

We have been unable to contribute to Canada's blood supply and **we wish to rectify this accessibility issue.**

Residents of the CBRM have not been able to participate in CBS's national initiative, The Partners for Life program, which encourages **organizations and community groups to support Canada's blood system** by pledging to donate blood as a team. *Commuting and donating* to the nearest clinic in Port Hawkesbury involve a round trip of approximately 4-5 hours. University-college students, young working parents, and past donors find this travel time prohibitive.

The CBRM is the second-largest municipality in Nova Scotia, with a population of approximately 109,000. The large post-secondary population at Cape Breton University, the Nova Scotia Community College, and the province's second medical school offer ideal opportunities to recruit the next generation of donors. These campuses provide ideal locations for mobile clinics. Universities and colleges across Canada have been participating in the *Partners for Life* program with CBS.

Other residents in our area with hemochromatosis undergo therapeutic blood removal in local hospitals, yet this usable blood is discarded; not providing life saving blood for others.

Yarmouth, 320 km from the CBS processing centre in Dartmouth, hosts several mobile clinics each year; the distance from Sydney to the processing centre is 390 km; the distance from Bathurst, another hosting location, is 460 km.

We have seen and heard your pleas. We want to help with new and continuous donors at a CBRM mobile clinic.
Please hold one mobile clinic in CBRM this year.

I look forward to **hearing from you soon** and **receiving your timely response.**

Sincerely,

Name Printed:

Contact information:

Cc: Mary Lee, NS Board Member, CBS