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Revelations of Grifols' non-compliance rate must result in end of contract: Ford government must comply with Voluntary Blood Donations Act & end for-profit/paid plasma

Toronto- The Ontario Health Coalition was joined by health coalitions from across Canada in a press conference today to call on Health Canada, Canadian Blood Services and provincial governments to take immediate action to end Grifols' authorization to collect plasma in Canada. In Ontario, specifically, the coalition demanded the Ford government comply with the Voluntary Blood Donations Act that prohibits paid plasma.

In recent days, a new non-compliance report was revealed for what Health Canada identified as Grifols' head office in Oakville. To date, there are at least five non-compliance inspections reports for Grifols facilities across Canada in [Regina](#), [Saskatoon](#), [St. John](#), [Calgary](#), and [Oakville](#) showing serious infractions from top to bottom of their operations, including inadequate screening of donors, ensuring plasma is not taken too frequently, cleaning and maintaining equipment, reporting, following proper processes for accidents and errors, and training of staff. The inspection reports came to light on the heels of the revelations of two deaths at Grifols paid plasma centres and a lawsuit from a third person for kidney damage. It has still not been revealed whether Health Canada has inspected the other Ontario Grifols centres for compliance since they began operating.

Grifols has operated for-profit paid plasma centres in Canada for only 3.5 years. In that time, Grifols facilities have been found non-compliant [more times](#) than all other blood products collection centres in Canada combined over the last fourteen years.

Deaths related to plasma collection are extremely rare. The two recent deaths at Grifols' facilities, combined with the gravity and frequency of their non-compliance issues, demonstrate a need for immediate action.

"The families and communities of those who died and been harmed, and Canadians who rely on a safe blood system, deserve answers and real accountability," said Natalie Mehra, executive director of the Ontario Health Coalition. "So far, neither has key information been disclosed nor has the Ford government taken action to stop the for-profit paid plasma in Ontario."

"It is disappointing that six months after the first tragic death, Health Canada has still not released the result of its investigation," added Geoff Cain, chair of the Ontario Health Coalition's Committee to Protect Ontario's Blood System and a retired staff person from Canadian Blood Services. "During the tainted blood scandal in the 1980s and 90s, it took thousands of deaths, months of lobbying by health activists and four years of the Krever Commission for governments to act. We can't wait for years to again protect the safety of our blood system."

"Under Ontario's Liberal government in 2014, the Voluntary Blood Donations Act was passed banning paid plasma. That prohibition was enforced until the Ford government allowed Grifols centres to open," noted Sara Labelle, co chair of the coalition's blood safety committee and a Medical Laboratory Technologist. "There is no "agency" clause that allows Canadian Blood Services to privatize plasma to pharmaceutical giant Grifols. Every community that has a Grifols centre also has a Canadian Blood Services plasma collection centre. For the safety of - and confidence in - our blood system, the Ford government must close down the Grifols centres."

Ontario's [Voluntary Blood Donations Act](#) allows an exemption for Canadian Blood Services (CBS) itself to pay for plasma in a clause that was meant to address an immediate crisis only. The Coalition argues that the excuse given

by CBS for its 15-year contract signed with Grifols in 2022 was an amorphous future projected shortage of plasma, including for cosmetic (not medically needed) uses. That contract remains secret.

At the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health on Friday, March 26, Grifols Canada's Mary Hughes, Vice-President, Sales and Commercial Operations was summoned to answer questions from Members of Parliament regarding two deaths at the company's collection centres. MPs on the committee unanimously agreed to a motion ordering the production of the 15-year agreement between Canadian Blood Services (CBS) and Grifols, which must be deposited with the committee by April 10, 2026.

"Grifols footdragged and showed lack of transparency about procedures when questioned by elected representatives and lawmakers," said Siobhán Vipond, Vice Chairperson of the Canadian Health Coalition.

"Grifols' official failed to fully answer questions, or take responsibility for what happened," added Noah Schulz of the Manitoba Health Coalition. "The logical response for Manitoba is to shut down their operations, investigate the deaths, and legislate the end of paid plasma donations like other provinces have done.... It's just too risky."

Their concerns are shared across the country. The Alberta Friends of Medicare issued [a statement](#) in response to the tragic deaths revealing inspection findings of non-compliance in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

"Why are these sites allowed to continue operating, and profiting from the buying and selling of Canadians' plasma?", added Chris Galloway, executive director today. "We have public solutions to collect blood and plasma safely and voluntarily, we don't need to be continuing down this for-profit road. It's time to put public safety first and bring plasma collection back under our public system."

For background on this issue, see <https://tinyurl.com/jdfape5r>