



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Blood Banks Supports International Effort To Provide Blood Joins other blood centers to assist Israel in emergency blood shortages

Sarasota-Suncoast Communities Blood Bank (SCBB) announced today that it joins nearly 35 other U.S. blood centers supporting an international effort to supply blood to Israel in extreme emergencies.

SCBB is a member of America's Blood Centers (ABC), North America's largest network of community-based blood programs. America's Blood Centers and its members remain committed to seeking international partnerships to maintain a safe and reliable blood supply. In a first time action, ABC and Israel's Magen David Adom (MDA) signed a contingency agreement to supply blood to MDA in emergency situations. The agreement is the result of a discussion that began in 2005 by MDA and makes America's Blood Centers MDA's primary backup blood supplier.

"As first responders SCBB remains committed to its mission of taking care of our community first and then others when circumstances permit," says Dr. Mark Magenheim, SCBB's CEO and Medical Director. "More and more, people will see that the need for blood is global. Over the past few years the transfusion industry has seen changes in operations and practices that clearly demand we keep up with international guidelines."

"In view of the potential for a serious international catastrophe, such as Avian Flu outbreak somewhere in the world, having an international partner with whom we can develop and test procedures, processes, and logistics for providing blood across vast distances in adverse circumstances, in the shortest possible time, seems to be a valuable readiness step," says Jim MacPherson, chief executive officer of America's Blood Centers. ABC will consider agreements with national blood organizations from any country in good standing with the U.S.

Who We Are

Suncoast Communities Blood Bank is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit community supported blood bank that has served Sarasota, Charlotte and DeSoto Counties since 1949. Suncoast Communities Blood Bank is the sole provider of blood and blood services to five hospitals: Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Doctors Hospital, DeSoto Memorial Hospital and HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospitals. In addition, we provide blood to Bayflite Medical Helicopter. SCBB also performs all transfusion services at Sarasota Memorial Hospital, serving approximately 8,000 patients per year. Our blood drive sponsors hold more than 1,000 blood drives per year. SCBB collects over 27,000 units of blood annually from over 14,000 individuals.

For more information about America's Blood Centers visit www.AmericasBlood.org

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