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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Saint Francis Hospital and Granby Ambulance Association Launch

EMS Whole Blood Program

Saint Francis and American Medical Response began the first Whole Blood Program in New England in August 2020 and have now expanded to Granby to provide whole blood to patients suffering severe blood loss during a medical or trauma emergency.

HARTFORD, Conn. (March 22, 2021) – Saint Francis Hospital, a Level 1 Trauma Center, and Granby Ambulance Association are pleased to announce the launch of a new program allowing whole blood to be administered to a trauma patient while still at the scene of an emergency, or while in transport to the hospital. Granby Ambulance Association (GAA) is now one of 36 EMS agencies in the country, and just the second in the New England, to establish a program to treat patients suffering from life threatening blood loss. Saint Francis partnered with American Medical Response in August 2020, establishing the first Whole Blood Program in the region.

“We are proud to partner with Granby Ambulance Association to provide this valuable service to the community,” said Dr. Steven Wolf, Chairman, Department of Emergency Medicine, Saint Francis Hospital. “Every second matters in a medical emergency or trauma situation. Research shows that administering warmed, whole blood at the time of the medical emergency can significantly improve survival and recovery rates for the patient.”

Low titer O-negative whole blood is stored between 1-9 degrees Celsius in a specialty cooler in the Granby station ambulance. A compact, portable, battery-operated blood warming system, including state-of-the-art blood tubing, warms the blood to 100 degrees Fahrenheit for administration to patients. Both medical and traumatic blood loss patients are eligible to receive this care under GAA protocol. This is similar technology used by military operations globally, and follows the same principles used in the hospital.

Whole blood is made up of several components, including plasma, platelets, and packed red blood cells. Currently the separate components are carried and administered by a small number of emergency responders. Standard practice for these responders utilizes a 1:1:1 ratio of each component. Research, however, has identified whole blood, which already contains the necessary clotting factors and platelets, as a preferred treatment for patients experiencing some type of severe blood loss.

“When the opportunity to provide whole blood transfusions in the prehospital setting was presented to Granby Ambulance Association, we knew this historic advancement in EMS was necessary to continue our commitment to advanced life support in our communities,” said Kate Coupe, Chief, Granby Ambulance Association. “With whole blood transfusions, the ability to save lives improves dramatically, and for small, tight-knit communities like East Granby, East Hartland, and Granby, that means more families and friends have the chance to keep that loved one for years to come. Advancing our prehospital care gives us a better opportunity to transition a more stable patient to the Emergency Department teams for the best possible outcome. GAA is honored to be called upon by Saint Francis Hospital as stewards of the prehospital whole blood transfusion program and a partner in healthy outcomes for the Farmington Valley.”

“This kind of treatment, whole blood and the equipment needed to administer it, and partnering with Granby Ambulance Association is a meaningful investment that will have lasting effects on our patients across the board,” said John Quinlavin, Emergency Services Manager, Saint Francis Hospital. “We share a mission to best serve our patients and community and providing whole blood in the field accomplishes that. This launch is a depiction of a true collaboration between GAA and Saint Francis Hospital to provide cutting edge, state of the art, lifesaving care to our patients and community.”

About Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center has been an anchor institution in north central Connecticut since 1897. In 2015, Saint Francis became part of Trinity Health Of New England, a member of Trinity Health, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation. Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center is licensed for 617 beds, is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other Saint Francis entities include the Comprehensive Women's Health Center, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, the Smilow Cancer Hospital Yale-New Haven at Saint Francis, and Trinity Health Of New England Medical Group. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @SaintFrancisCT

About Granby Ambulance Association (GAA)

Granby Ambulance Association (GAA) provides regional emergency medical services for the towns of East Granby, East Hartland, and Granby, covering over 70 square miles of north central Connecticut and protecting nearly 19,000 residents. Serving since 1963, GAA is a non-profit, combination department of full-time, per diem, and volunteer paramedics and EMTs that respond from Granby and East Granby stations. In 2020, Granby Ambulance professionals responded to over 1,850 calls for service. GAA is an American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline Silver award winner for cardiovascular care three years running.

GAA's Board of Directors would like to thank the continued generosity of our neighbors and local businesses whose contributions made the purchase of the Whole Blood Program equipment possible. In addition to emergency medical treatment and transport, GAA also prides itself on community outreach and education in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, and Stop the Bleed® bleeding control courses. Follow us on Facebook or email info@granbyambulance.org for more information.