



For Immediate Release

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Carter BloodCare one of only two U.S. laboratories to receive AABB accreditation for molecular testing for red cell antigens

Lab uses donor and patient DNA to offer more precise blood matching

DALLAS/ FORT WORTH, Texas (April 22, 2016) – Carter BloodCare, a blood center serving 200 medical facilities in 50-plus Texas counties, announces it is only the second blood center in the United States to receive the Molecular Testing Accreditation for Red Cell Antigens, from the international organization AABB. The accreditation is voluntary, meaning the blood center subjected itself to the rigorous examination of its protocols and procedures in the molecular laboratory, to ensure the team is doing the best possible work for their hospital customers.

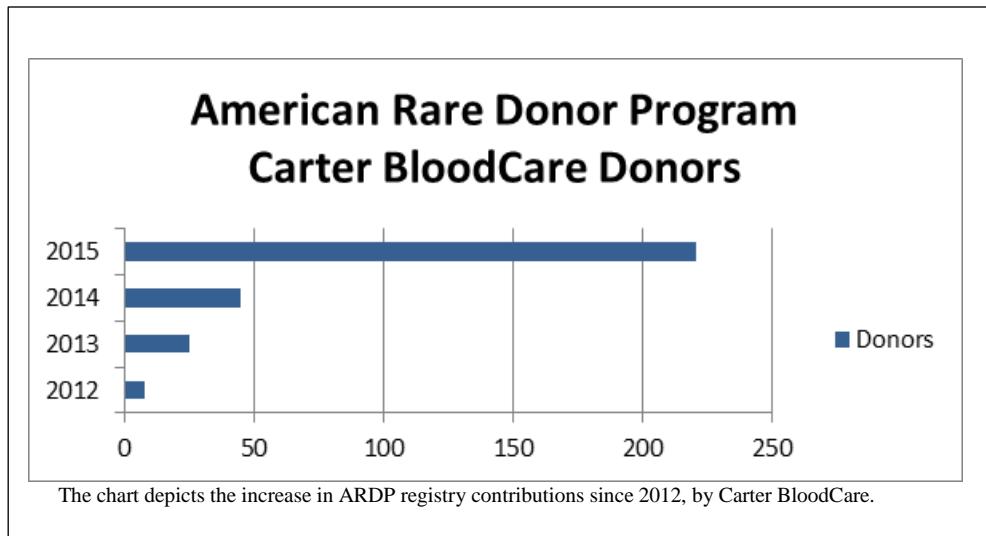
Molecular testing is a technique used to assess an individual’s genetic code, or genetic makeup. The goal of molecular testing is to predict a patient’s or blood donor’s red blood cell phenotype. This provides the healthcare professional with information specific to the individual patient to enable accurate diagnosis; and when required, the transfusion of molecular-matched, compatible red blood cells for optimal treatment.

“This accreditation gives our medical facility customers yet another reason to trust the level of complexity and quality service Carter BloodCare can deliver,” said Dr. William Crews, medical director of Carter BloodCare’s laboratory services. “As a blood center participant in America’s Rare Donor Program (ARDP), molecular testing enables us to increase our active rare donor contributions to the registry and help to fulfill the requests for rare blood across the United States. It allows us to reduce client costs and testing time by implementing modified patient work-up protocols and, most importantly, increase patient safety by offering genotypically matched blood.”

In 2015, Carter BloodCare registered 221 new, rare donors into the ARDP because of molecular testing; bringing to 317, the total number of active rare donors that Carter BloodCare has registered into

(more)

the program. In just the fourth quarter last year, 98 rare units were shipped in the Center’s service area. In 2015 the blood center was also able to provide 18 units of rare blood, identified through molecular testing, to ARDP participants nationally.



Dr. Crews says that molecular testing is also valuable when finding compatible red blood cells for transfusion in patients living with sickle cell disease (SCD) or other diseases that require chronic blood transfusion. Other situations where molecular testing plays a critical role are recently transfused patients with warm autoantibodies, patients with antibodies to high-prevalence antigens, and patients who express a weak D phenotype.

“Imagine that a person living with SCD receives multiple units of red cells from different blood donors, monthly, over a course of many years. The transfusion recipient can develop multiple antibodies to the donors’ antigens, making it increasingly difficult to find compatible blood for the patient,” said Crews. “Molecular testing makes it possible to identify precisely matched blood early on, increasing patient safety with genotypically matched blood.”

About Carter BloodCare Laboratory Services

Carter BloodCare laboratories include the newly accredited AABB molecular testing laboratory, AABB-accredited immunohematology reference laboratory, AABB- and FACT-accredited cell therapy (stem-cell) laboratory, ASHI-accredited HLA laboratory, and two AABB-accredited transfusion laboratories.