FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FDA Increases Minimum Hemoglobin Requirement for Male Blood Donors

The Community Blood Center encourages all donors to “Bring a Buddy” to fill deficit

APPLETON, Wis. (May 11, 2016)—Due to a change in Code of Federal Regulations by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), The Community Blood Center will increase the minimum hemoglobin level required for men to donate blood starting Monday, May 23, 2016. All male donors must now have a hemoglobin level equal to or greater than 13.0 grams per deciliter (g/dL) to donate blood—a 0.5 g/dL increase from the previous 12.5 g/dL requirement.

“Donor health and safety is of primary importance,” stated Dr. Todd Straus, chief medical officer & vice president, quality & medical services at The Community Blood Center. “As new research is conducted, these changes are necessary to comply with the latest regulations, ensuring the health and wellness of all our donors.”

The Community Blood Center estimates this new requirement will impact 2–3% of male donors, potentially affecting 5% of its blood supply. The Community Blood Center is seeking new donors to restore the potential loss.

The Community Blood Center is urging all donors to “Bring a Buddy” to upcoming blood donation appointments—not only to compensate for donors who may be deferred based on their hemoglobin level, but also to introduce new potential donors to the simple and rewarding process of blood donation. “We believe in our community, and hope they will rally with us to ensure we have an adequate blood supply for patients in need and the hospitals we serve,” said Kristine Belanger, vice president of donor services at The Community Blood Center.

To ensure a safe blood supply, all donors must meet specific eligibility criteria outlined by the FDA, accrediting organizations (such as AABB) and individual donation centers. To donate in Wisconsin, individuals must be at least 16 years old, in general good health, and must meet weight and hemoglobin level requirements on donation day. Donors are encouraged to eat a regular meal and drink plenty of water prior to donation, and present a photo ID upon donation. To schedule a blood donation, please call (800) 280-4102 or visit www.communityblood.org.

Established in 1955, The Community Blood Center is an independent nonprofit providing a safe and reliable blood supply to hospitals in Northeast Wisconsin, the Northwoods and upper Michigan. The Community Blood Center has donor centers in Appleton, Oshkosh, Little Chute and Woodruff, plus hosts over 100 blood drives every month. For more information on how you can donate blood or host a blood drive, please visit www.communityblood.org or call 800-280-4102.

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