COMMUNICATIONS

Letter to the Editors

Remembering September 11

In response to the invitation from Delores Mallory and Mary McGinniss to share our September 11 blood-bank-related stories, I have attached a brief statement that I wrote shortly after the event for a Day of Unity recognition that was arranged for our entire hospital personnel to share their stories of preparedness, strength, and unity. As you may know, New York–Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center is located just 4½ miles from ground zero, on the upper east side of Manhattan. As it turned out, we used more blood for the World Trade Center victims than any other hospital, even though we were not the closest to the site. That was because we are the main burn center for the city. In the hours after the disaster, we did not transfuse a single unit in the Emergency Department. My blood-bank-related story and dedication to the Blood Bank staff follows.

It was not in our Disaster Plan, but within minutes of our learning of the September 11 tragedy, the entire Blood Bank staff and our Pathology Residents had sprung into action like a team that had done it all before; i.e., to pack coolers full of ice and units of blood and deliver them to the Emergency Department (ED) for the expected flood of victims. Soon after, a small team had set up a dispensing station in the ED, ready to transfuse blood as needed under the safest possible conditions, by more than a hundred physicians who were silently poised for action. Meanwhile, the entire universal donor inventory of about 230 units of group O blood in the Blood Bank was quickly packed and on ice and made ready for immediate transfer to the ED if it was needed. The teamwork and cooperation was incredible; all was quietly accomplished without confusion and within minutes. What a wonderful group of people! What a wonderful response to an incomprehensible disaster. What devotion to the vital task at hand. What overwhelming sadness, when later in the day it became clear there would be no flood of casualties needing our help. But the next day began the blood donor drive. We kept busy, not thinking about what had happened, but thinking about our duty to those who had borne the brunt of the attack, both living and dead, and thinking about all our colleagues and loved ones, and how fortunate we were to still be here and able to love one another as never before.

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Letter From the Editors

Ortho Dedication

Out of the 18 years that Immunohematology has been published, Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics has generously given its support for 12 of those years! Each of the last 12 years, Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics has distributed copies of every issue of the journal to members of their Bankers Club and each September, has contributed to the publication of the September issue—or the “Ortho” issue, as it has become known to the editors and staff. This is no small contribution. Once again, it demonstrates the sincere regard of the company for the customer, the patient, and the field of immunohematology.

If you appreciate this as much as we at Immunohematology do, please tell your Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics sales representatives how much you enjoy their support of this journal.

Delores Mallory
Editor-in-Chief

Mary McGinniss
Managing Editor

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