



January 2021

An Open Letter to the Presidents, Chancellors, Boards of Directors, and Faculty of University and Colleges

As many of you are aware, we face daunting rises in COVID-19 case counts, hospitalizations, and deaths in most of the country. More than 150,000 Americans test positive for COVID-19 every day but more than 8.6 million have recovered, so the need is great, but so is the opportunity to help and make a difference.

I am calling on institutions to activate their students and faculty in order to encourage the donation and facilitate the collection of COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma (CCP).

CCP is a treatment option that is safe and may be effective when given as early as possible to hospitalized patients with COVID-19. In fact, more than 350,000 Americans have received this treatment and physicians continue to request CCP for their patients.

The nationwide increase in COVID-19 infections has caused a massive spike in demand for CCP. That demand is quickly approaching more than 30,000 units per week. Currently we are on par for collecting 30,000 units/week, but with increasing demand, it becomes more challenging to support the need. Current collections may not meet the demand as cases continue to rise exponentially over the next several weeks.

We are reaching out to our colleges and universities to not only encourage donations within respective campus communities, but to also consider hosting a campus CCP collection event or CCP drive. The CCP collection process is very similar to the blood donation process and the blood centers follow strict guidelines for safety, sanitation, and social distancing. For example, The University of Wisconsin (Madison), Michigan State University, and The Ohio State University have all hosted successful events where they were able to collect CCP.

As the heads of your institutions, we urge you to encourage and support the organization, broadcasting and championing of CCP donations as well as CCP drives within the college and university communities. I recognize that the college/university experience is quite different in a pandemic, but student led organizations can partner with local blood centers to think of creative and innovative ways to hold these CCP drives without compromising safety. The colleges and universities only need to provide the space, volunteers and donors. The blood centers will provide everything else necessary to host a successful CCP drive.

We appreciate your support in this important effort. In addition to social distancing, wearing a face covering, and practicing good hygiene—donating CCP is another way that the nation can continue to fight back against COVID-19.

/Dr. Jerome M. Adams/

Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH
U.S. Surgeon General