

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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**Is The Nation's Blood Supply As Important As The Opioid Crisis? Top Federal Health Officials and Blood Banking Leaders Say Yes**

*U.S. Health Official and Bloodworks Northwest Chief Tell Congress the Need For More Young Donors Never Greater*

**SEATTLE, WA** – America's blood centers faced with chronic shortages, urgently need a new generation of blood donors because the current donor base is ageing out. Maintaining an adequate blood supply is a national public health issue on par with the nation's opioid crisis. That's the message [Dr. Brett Giror](#), the Assistant Secretary of Health at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and Bloodworks Northwest CEO & President, [Dr. James P. AuBuchon](#) will share with lawmakers and the largest network of nonprofit community blood centers around the country representing half the nation's blood supply at [America's Blood Centers](#) Annual Meeting March 23-26 in Washington, D.C.

On March 25, Dr. Giror will be speaking about the urgency of maintaining an adequate blood supply which he considers one of the top five most important public health issues facing America today, arguably on par he says, with the opioid crisis. Dr. Giror, one of the nation's top public health officials, is expected to applaud efforts made to reach out to young donors like what Bloodworks Northwest is doing.

Later that day, Dr. AuBuchon will receive The Bill Coenen President's Award (for lifetime achievement) from America's Blood Centers. The next day on Capitol Hill, AuBuchon will be part of team from Bloodworks Northwest bringing Washington state Congressional leaders up to speed with challenges that need to be addressed now in the U.S. blood supply. AuBuchon has served as a member of the Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and has chaired the Biomedical Excellence for Safer Transfusion Collaborative, an international research group dedicated to improving transfusion. He is a past President of the AABB (formerly known as American Association of Blood Banks). Later this year, after ten years heading Bloodworks Northwest, Dr. AuBuchon will be retiring.

Experts say the nation's blood supply urgently needs "young blood" so it's reaching out to millennial donors as reported in [USA Today](#) September, 2017. Last fall, Seattle-based [GeekWire](#) reported on the launch of the new [Bloodworks Mobile App](#), targeted to young donors. The Bloodworks app now has over 11,000 downloads, most of those millennials and first-time

donors. Based on its early success, the app's developers at Western Washington-based Degree37 are now being approached by other blood centers inquiring about the app. The American Red Cross, not affiliated with Bloodworks or America's Blood Centers, also has an app.

Dr. Jim AuBuchon and Mark Gilman, from Degree37 will be in Washington March 21 and available for interviews.

### **About BloodworksNW**

Bloodworks (formerly Puget Sound Blood Center) is backed by 75 years of Northwest history and 250,000 donors. It is local, nonprofit, independent, volunteer-supported and community-based. A recognized leader in transfusion medicine, Bloodworks serves patients in more than 90 hospitals in Washington, Oregon and Alaska — partnering closely with local hospitals to deliver the highest level of patient care. Comprehensive services include blood components, complex cross-matching, specialized lab services for organ transplants, care for patients with blood disorders, and collection of cord blood stem cells for cancer treatment. Bloodworks Research Institute performs leading-edge research in blood biology, transfusion medicine, blood storage and treatment of blood disorders. Patients with traumatic injuries, undergoing surgeries or organ transplantation, or receiving treatment for cancer and blood disorders all depend on our services, expertise, laboratories and research. For more information, visit [bloodworksnw.org](http://bloodworksnw.org)

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