

Final mobile blood drive, fully booked

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Canadian Blood Services is holding its final mobile blood drive clinic of the year in Shelburne on Dec. 11 and all of the appointments to donate have already been filled.

“What I would say for Shelburne is to certainly thank the community for stepping up and filling up that clinic,” said Elaine St. Pierre, territory manager for Canadian Blood Services. “It’s really important to know that if you did grab a spot, to take that hour out of your day, make that commitment and show up because we do need every single unit that we booked in.”

Canadian Blood Services generally holds a blood drive in Shelburne at the Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex every three months, and while the COVID-19 pandemic has created restrictions for the non-profit organization, the need for blood continues.

“The need for blood is something that is maintained, it’s there every day and it doesn’t matter that there’s a pandemic; babies are still being born every day; mothers are still having complications during childbirth; people still have cancer; there are still going to be car accidents,” said St. Pierre. “There are things that are going on every day that are constantly uses for blood.”

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, following a call to action for donations, St. Pierre says that the Canadian Blood Services saw a surge of people going to clinics to donate blood. With hospitals halting elective procedures and treatments that tend to have high use for blood, she notes they also experienced a dip in the demand.

“We were very lucky that we happened to go into the pandemic with a good strong inventory in the country,” said St. Pierre.

Canadian Blood Services resuming their donor clinics has since seen a reduced capacity for collecting blood, with physical distancing protocols and cleaning measures restricting the number of people they’re able to process. “They’ve also seen a spike in the need for blood donations.

“The demand for the hospital using the blood has gone back up to pre-pandemic levels, yet, we’re still constrained by our capacity to collect because of the need for physical distancing,” said St. Pierre.

Now, with the demand back at pre-pandemic levels and walk-in donations not permitted, St. Pierre is urging those who have signed up to show up for their appointments as they need “every single unit booked in.”

While appointments for the Shelburne mobile clinic have already fully booked up, St. Pierre adds that those looking to donate in the future can still check their eligibility to donate blood.

Appointments can be booked at www.blood.ca or call 1-888-2DONATE.