

Plasma Centers in the Community

BY JOSHUA PENROD



For a number of years now, PPTA and member companies have engaged in a long-term industry profile project, designed to improve understanding about source plasma and plasma collection for a variety of audiences. From people who are considering donation to patient stakeholders and their families, plasma and plasma products are too often poorly understood. At worst, failure to recognize the importance of plasma can harm others. As a result of this, the industry profile project seeks to educate a broad cross-section of people in the United States and Europe about the importance of plasma and the special nature of plasma donation.

By now, many thousands of people have seen the educational videos that the industry has produced, and many more have visited our websites, notably www.donatingplasma.org. The sites have easy-to-access and useful facts about plasma and plasma donation, as do the brochures and other materials that we've developed in multiple languages.

The action point for many plasma centers, however, is within the local community. With national and international campaigns, and even endorsements by members of Congress and state governors, the neighborhood in which a plasma center dwells is the world that is experienced. Individuals, neighboring businesses and community groups who know only about rumors and jaded pictures provided by the industry's detractors are willing to fight against a plasma center – be it a new operation, or an expanded operation already in existence. Oftentimes, detractors will use “facts” and “figures” from decades ago, alleging that such derogatory portrayals of the past are valid today. Plasma collection centers, whether in Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, or the United States, can always benefit from presenting the best and most positive aspects of plasma collection to the community in which they are located.

It is time to replace fiction with fact! Locating a plasma collection center in a community gives a significant boost to the neighborhood and surrounding areas, and here are a few reasons why:

- » Employment at a plasma center gives anywhere from 40-60 local people good jobs, with many full-time and part-time opportunities.
- » Working at a plasma center can create a new pathway for a career in the industry or other allied health care fields.
- » A plasma center which collects 60,000 donations a year can put millions of dollars per year back into the local economy. IQPP-certified plasma collection centers only accept donors who reside in the local area, essentially guaranteeing that the money distributed in donation fees gets recirculated back into the community benefiting local businesses, restaurants, banks and so on.
- » Creation of a greater tax base within the community, developing real estate and attracting other businesses to the area. A plasma center creates a relationship with members of community, in which the center itself acts as an economic pump driving goods and services into the area.
- » Plasma products developed from plasma collected at each and every plasma center are used to treat people not only in far-off places, away from the center, but many friends, neighbors and relatives of those in the community.

Just these points alone ought to be enough to convince any community group that a plasma collection center is a winning economic and social benefit. “Ought to be,” however, isn't always the case; the myths and the difficulties of perception still endure. With the ongoing efforts of the industry, and events like International Plasma Awareness Week (IPAW), we are working to make sure that more people know about the great things that happen globally...and locally...with plasma collection. ●

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