



# Planning for the Unexpected

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At an industry event in 2011, former PPTA Source Board of Directors Chair, Shinji Wada (Grifols), introduced us to the Japanese term, “*Sou-Tei-Gai*,” which means “beyond what one expected, not foreseen.”<sup>1</sup>

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Every company has plans for business continuity to guarantee its operations run smoothly even when faced with unpredictable events. These past few months, the United States has faced California wildfires and two catastrophic hurricanes. Additionally, some plasma collectors have experienced an anticoagulant shortage. At the October Business Forum in Las Vegas, we asked members how they manage to ensure the availability of sufficient quality plasma, even when threatened with the most challenging of circumstances, whether it is a national disaster or a product shortage.

Charles Auger (Grifols) shared parts of his company’s business continuity strategy. For Grifols, it is not just about having a plan in place but also ensuring a safe and reliable supply of plasma is also part of the Grifols corporate philosophy. He pointed out that ensuring staff safety during and after an event was paramount. Mr. Auger added that he believes our industry will always be able to withstand events like the ones experienced this year due to a number of factors, including:

- Large geographic diversity provides inherent protection.
- Companies are prepared and resilient.
- Donors remain motivated and are agile.
- Expanding U.S. donor center network continues to shrink the risk.

Dr. Jan Hartmann (Haemonetics) maintained that business continuity planning is a key value driver to any industry, but especially for plasma protein therapies (PPTs). For Dr. Hartmann’s company, business continuity planning includes four main elements: quality and safety assurance; data security; sourcing and supply chain; and enabling the



CHARLES AUGER



DR. JAN HARTMANN



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growing demand. Dr. Hartmann outlined the four principles of the Haemonetics approach, which include understanding continuous evolution, utilizing a cross-functional team, adopting a holistic view with third-party assessment, and leveraging people, processes, and technology.

For Jamie Sielatycki (HemaSource), helping customers ensure business continuity is key to his company’s mission. For him, understanding the unique needs of our industry and individual customers is paramount. As with the other companies on the panel, redundancy and backup sources are critical to ensuring that we can be prepared for the unexpected. According to Mr. Sielatycki, a company should always consider the “what if?” when developing its plan.

Christian Lee (Abbott), reinforced messages regarding preparation and planning. Business interruptions have an effect on many different aspects of operations, including the reputation of a company and its brand. Prioritization and communication among suppliers, customers, and other partners are important components in business continuity.

Eddie Kubo (Fresenius Kabi) discussed business continuity planning from a supply perspective. For Mr. Kubo, transparency is essential. It is important to maintain regular communications with customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders and to keep customers informed as events unfold. Like others, Mr. Kubo stressed the importance of ensuring employee welfare. He noted that company employees are the frontline when it comes to preparing for an event as well as re-establishing and maintaining production after the event has occurred. He

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related his company’s efforts during the recent hurricanes in Puerto Rico, where it maintains two production facilities.

The mission of the PPTA is to promote the availability of and access to safe and effective plasma protein therapeutics (PPTs) for all patients in the world. Our members recognize the importance of ensuring business continuity, even under the most dire of circumstances, so that quality source plasma remains available for the manufacturing of safe and effective therapies to treat patients worldwide.

References:

1. Wada, S. “International Quality Plasma Program 20th Anniversary; the Industry Standards and Beyond.” PPTA Source Business Forum, October 23, 2011.