

Q&A: Understanding the Essential Costs of Blood Processing

Why does Carter BloodCare charge hospitals for blood that has been donated?

This is a great question on an often misunderstood topic. Providing a safe, readily available blood supply for patients is an essential responsibility in health care, one which comes with its own operational costs for blood processing. Hospitals help offset expenses that cover the complete donation process, ranging from donor recruitment to distribution. These costs include equipment for safely collecting, processing and storing blood; rigorous testing to prevent transmission of infections; salaries and health care for blood center employees; rent on neighborhood donor centers; payments on buildings that house Carter BloodCare's preparation, storage and distribution facilities; and fuel and maintenance for mobile donation buses that service more than 50 counties across North, Central and East Texas.

Does Carter BloodCare receive other financial support?

No. Carter BloodCare does not receive grants, funding or foundation support to cover our critical, day-to-day community services.

If hospitals pay for blood processing, why do they charge patients who are blood donors for their transfusions?

Occasionally, when blood donors become transfusion recipients, their hospital bill may show a charge for blood used in a medical procedure. This is because the hospital must cover many of its own costs, such as maintenance of its on-hand blood inventory, ensuring blood is compatible for each patient, performing the transfusion, testing to ensure the patient responds favorably to the transfusion, and the services of medical professionals who administer care at every stage.

So why doesn't Carter BloodCare pay donors for giving blood?

As your community's nonprofit blood center, we only collect blood, platelets and plasma from volunteers who want to help others by donating. When our donors voluntarily give, they directly help Texas patients – including those receiving cancer treatments, children with anemia, trauma and accident patients, older adults with health issues, and mothers having difficult childbirths – in area hospitals whose blood is supplied by Carter BloodCare. However, that is not the case with for-profit companies that pay to collect blood products, which are often expensed and shipped to facilities in other countries. Carter BloodCare's volunteer donors recognize the positive, lifesaving effect their donations have on local families in need.

For more information, please contact mediarelations@carterbloodcare.org.