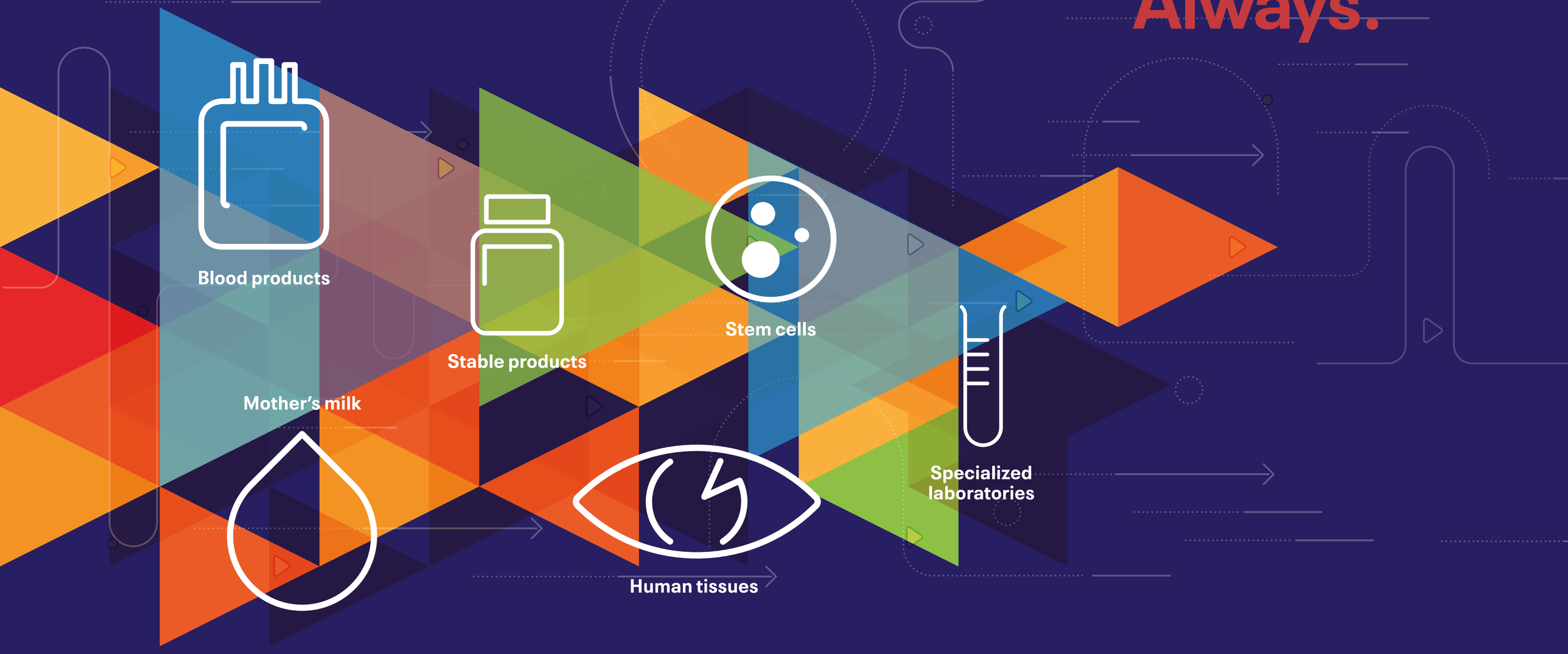
Moving forward.

Always.



HÉMA-QUÉBEC

2021–2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission

To efficiently meet the needs of the Québec population for quality blood and other biological products of human origin.

Vision

To become a strategic partner for the Québec health system.

Héma-Québec's 2021–2022 annual report covers the fiscal year from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

The year at a glance

128,961
blood donors

20,800
donors of plasma for fractionation

53,954
registered stem cell donors

2,784
cord blood donors

861
human tissue donors

731
mother's milk donors

208,091
blood, plasma, stem cell, human tissue, and mother's milk donors

295,871
blood products delivered

475,099
stable products delivered

129
non-related stem cell transplants, including **13** cord blood transplants

5,520
human tissues distributed to hospitals

23,345
bottles of mother's milk distributed

799,964
products distributed (all donation types)

1,551
employees

$443M
in annual revenues

Summary

Leaders' message

A clear vision for the future

If the rollercoaster ride of the past 12 months, created by the pandemic, seemed like déjà vu, we were nevertheless able to make good headway on the many issues that will shape the future of Héma-Québec. The thought process undertake to implement a new strategic plan is now completed, and its result was formalized at the end of 2021, before being unveiled and shared with all our employees and partners.

We have a clear roadmap that will guide our objectives for the next three years. It will serve as a foundational tool as we modernize our organization. In this regard, the 2021–2022 fiscal year is part of a continuing process, marking the start of an accelerated transition toward achieving our medium- and long-term objectives.

As the 25th anniversary of Héma-Québec approaches, we are proud to confirm that our teams were able, once again this year, to deliver on our primary mission of efficiently meeting the needs of the Québec population for quality blood and other biological products of human origin. Despite the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the emergence of the Omicron variant, we have ensured a sufficient and safe supply in collaboration with our health network partners and with the ongoing commitment of our dedicated staff and many volunteers.

Our resilience makes us stronger

Overcoming these obstacles also enabled our organization to demonstrate its resilience and ability to adapt. Positive elements emerged, including a donation system by appointment that, has proven invaluable, enhancing the overall experience of donors, staff and volunteers while contributing to the greater visibility of blood drives. At the heart of this transformation is the increased role of the JeDonne web-based app, part of a broader desire to update the use of technology in all our activities, be they leading-edge solutions to increase the efficiency of our operations or the adoption of more targeted performance indicators for management and production. We also continue to focus on developing the competencies of our talent and improving management as we recognize the important role our teams play in safeguarding our mission.

The public health crisis also provided an opportunity to showcase the outstanding scientific expertise existing within Héma-Québec, including in the context of a growing number of research partnerships and public health collaborations. Héma-Québec is transforming itself to ensure that it is well positioned to continue meeting the new challenges that arise as Québec's health network evolves over the coming decades. Developing concrete initiatives to increase self-sufficiency in plasma and human tissues is part of this transformation.

Anne Bourhis
Chair of the Board of Directors

Nathalie Fagnan
President and Chief Executive Officer

Strategic partner of the health network

The end of the 2021–2022 fiscal year marked a gradual return to what can be called the "new normal" for our entire health system. Héma-Québec played an active supporting role in this recovery, strengthening existing collaborations with the various network players to be ready to respond to the increased demand for biological products. We wish to highlight the openness and quality of the interactions maintained with our partners at the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and with public health authorities, in support of the pursuit of our mission.

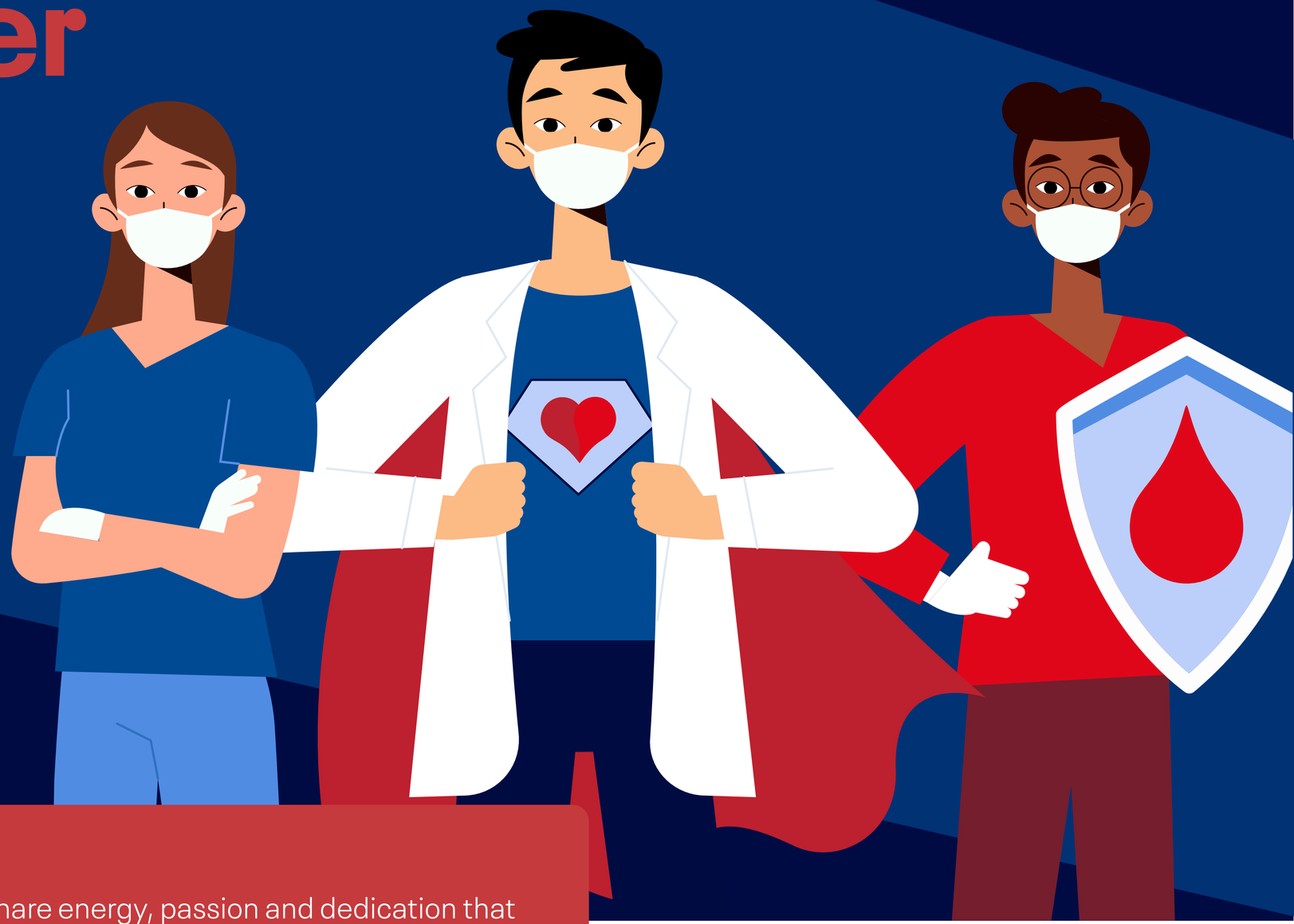
Every year, Héma-Québec delivers more than 800,000 biological products of human origin to Québec hospitals to meet patients' needs. Delivery of these services would be impossible without the generous participation of our nearly 200,000 donors, blood drive teams and thousands of volunteers, our entire staff and our many partners in the health network. Thank you also to the members of our Board of Directors, whose unfailing commitment has enabled us to look to the future with the adoption of our new strategic plan. Héma-Québec has a clear vision for the future, resting on solid foundations. Empowered by the strength of this collective effort, we are firmly convinced that our organization will continue to serve the Québec population with renewed success.

Thank you to everyone!

Héma-Québec, an employer of choice

All dedicated to saving lives

Every day, we work together to save lives. Through this shared humane mission, our work environment is based on respect, openness and collaboration. Efforts are constantly being made to promote the well-being and aspirations of our employees. In short, when we take care of our people, they can take care of others and contribute to the cause of the gift of life.



Employees dedicated to a noble cause

The 1,550 members who make up our team share energy, passion and dedication that are constantly renewed. Hats off to their outstanding commitment!

OUR VALUES

Integrity/honesty • Respect • Commitment • Empowerment

A work environment that fosters growth

Héma-Québec promotes equal opportunity and encourages internal mobility. The employee experience is continually evolving. By acting positively on people's lives, we create a work environment that is as passionate as it is stimulating, one in which the quality of human relationships holds an essential place. Listening and promoting strong values of inclusion and diversity are the cornerstone of our culture.

Work methods adapted to the new reality

Héma-Québec has listened to its employees and offers more in the way of work flexibility. Our telework policy ranges from total at-home work to a daily presence in the office, or a mix of both, when duties permit, obviously. Our collaborative framework protects employees' personal lives, with the right to disconnect at lunch, in the evenings and on weekends.

With offices in Montréal and Québec City, in addition to its GLOBULE and PLASMAVIE donor centres, Héma-Québec is an active employer in many outlying areas. Telework now supports hiring across Québec.

A matter of benefits

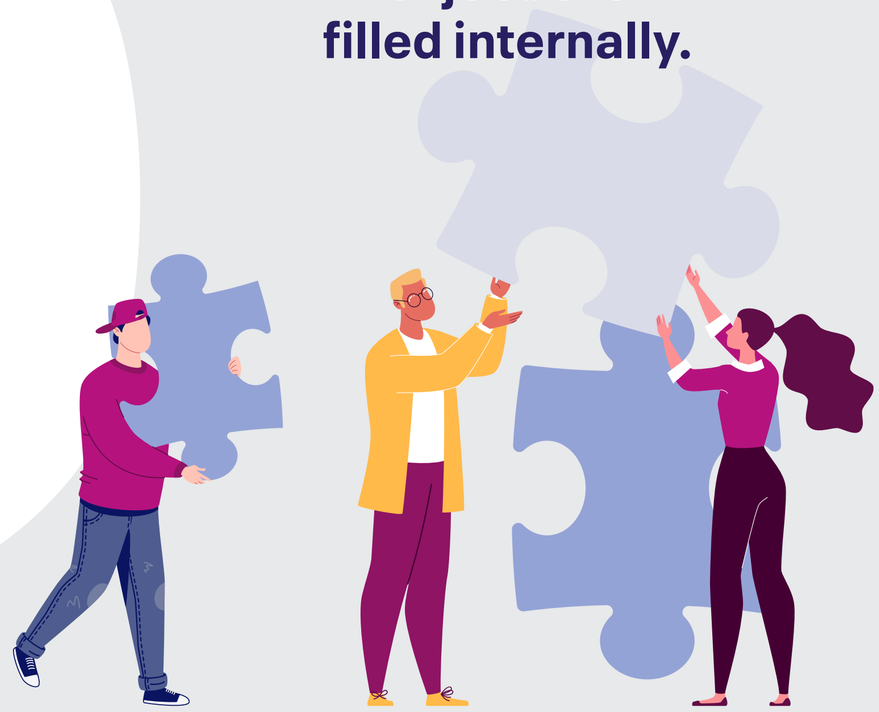
At Héma-Québec, those who join our team will find working conditions and a range of benefits that represent great added value:

- A generous benefits program
- A telemedicine program available 24/7
- A defined benefit pension plan
- Four weeks of annual vacation starting in the first year for the majority of employees, statutory holidays and personal leave
- A work-life balance policy
- A well-established training and development program
- Coverage for academic courses, sports activities and public transit fees

Room to move and grow:

20%

of jobs are filled internally.



For people and the planet

We take our responsibilities seriously and make our staff aware of the importance of acting in a spirit of social responsibility and sustainable development. In fact, with a vision for the future, sustainable development has been identified as one of the organization's six priorities in its 2021–2025 Strategic Plan.

The benefits of benefits

I've used the telemedicine service a few times, and it's really practical. Quick access to health professionals means I can avoid waiting rooms. Video consultations allow them to diagnose common problems more accurately and tell us what steps to take. It's reassuring.

– **Nathalie Truong,** Training and Professional Skills Development Adviser

An integrated organization, a variety of jobs

As a truly integrated business, all job functions intersect within Héma-Québec:

- **Corporate roles** – finance, technology, marketing, human resources, legal affairs, communications
- **Medical affairs and scientific research** – research and development, microbiology, epidemiology, transfusion specialties, immunology
- **Regulatory affairs and compliance** – quality assurance, quality and development, audits, laboratories, compliance, biovigilance
- **Biological product collection operations** – supply, logistics, transportation, technical assistance, technicians, nurses, client services

The broad range of talent found here creates an extremely rich and inspiring environment, with so many personalities to discover. As in a large family, each profile finds its place here.

Training that enhances skills

No one wants to just mark time. Our training programs provide the tools needed to advance a professional career. Whether it is our four-step leadership program, regulatory training or professional development, everything is done to support our employees' expectations and ambitions.

Diversified and inclusive daily work

Within our teams, diversity and inclusion are more than just words to be defined. Today, 16% of our staff comes from ethnocultural minorities. Our policy of equity, inclusion and access to diversity guarantees equal opportunity for all, reflecting the openness and welcoming quality of our organization. Differences are a true wealth, and we focus first and foremost on skills and passion.

Our structure includes more than

400

types of jobs and offers a vast array of opportunities

Building a career within the same organization

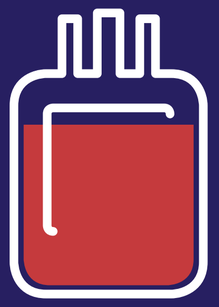
I began my career as a lab technician at Héma-Québec 22 years ago. Several years later, I had the opportunity to join the IT team. That was a complete change! I had some experience as a systems user, but I was offered the required training to master my new field. I've always felt there was great openness and support for my choices. I've met wonderful people in my workplace and through my work on the social committee. It's stimulating to be part of such a diversified team.

– **Nathalie Desmeules**, IT Solutions Analyst

We want to build the future with talented, diversified and mobilized teams.

Discover our stimulating careers here.

Sectors of activity



BLOOD PRODUCTS

Blood is the fluid that flows through the body's veins and arteries.

It is made up of plasma, in which three types of cells are suspended: red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets.

Every 80 seconds, someone in Québec needs blood.
It may be following an accident, during surgery or to treat an illness.

STABLE PRODUCTS

Stable products are medications that are manufactured primarily **from plasma, the liquid part of blood that transports blood cells and nutrients in the body.**

Thousands of Quebecers need plasma to treat various illnesses, including neurological disorders, immune deficiencies and other diseases, such as hemophilia.

STEM CELLS

Stem cells are the "parent" cells from which all other blood cells develop.

They are found in bone marrow, peripheral (circulating) blood and umbilical cord blood.

For some diseases, stem cell transplants are the only chance of survival. Some diseases cause the destruction or abnormal functioning of the bone marrow. The treatment of last resort consists of replacing the patient's stem cells with those of a healthy person.

HUMAN TISSUES

Human tissues – e.g., ocular tissues, heart valves, skin tissues, arterial tissues and musculoskeletal tissues – can be collected for transplantation purposes.

One tissue donor can help up to 20 people, whether to restore sight with a corneal transplant or to treat a serious burn victim using skin grafts.

MOTHER'S MILK

Human milk from a bank is particularly beneficial for infants born extremely preterm who cannot be breastfed by their mother.

It reduces the risk of developing a serious intestinal disease.

Accomplishments by activity sector

BLOOD PRODUCTS

As the exclusive supplier of blood products in Québec, Héma-Québec is responsible for recruiting donors and for collecting, testing, processing and delivering products to hospitals.

149,761
registered donors (all donation types combined)

1,74
whole blood donations on average per donor

1,424
blood drives

378,817
visits to collection sites (all donation types combined)

206,409
whole blood donations

143,355
apheresis donations

295,871
blood products delivered to hospitals

From donation to distribution

ANALYSES

The samples are sent to a qualification lab to determine the donor's blood group and to screen for the presence of infections.

SEPARATION OF BLOOD

The blood is separated into its different components (red blood cells, platelets, plasma).

STORAGE

Compliant products are labelled and stored, ready to be sent to hospitals.

DELIVERY

The products are delivered to hospitals. The components used vary depending on patients' needs.

TRANSPORTATION

The blood bags and samples are sent to one of Héma-Québec's laboratories.

DONATION

The blood collection lasts about ten minutes. In addition to the blood bag, sample tubes are collected for testing.

Just 3% of Québec's adult population gives blood.

STABLE PRODUCTS

Héma-Québec is the exclusive distributor of stable products for Québec. It is responsible for supply strategies, the purchase of medications manufactured primarily from plasma, inventory management and product distribution to hospitals. It also looks after donor recruitment, collection and testing, and sending a part of the plasma it collects for fractionation.

20,800
registered plasma donors

145,946
litres of plasma destined for the manufacture of medications
120,088 in 2019–2020 | 140,269 in 2020–2021

30.6%
immunoglobulin self-sufficiency rate
21.4% in 2019–2020 | 27.9% in 2020–2021

475,099
stable products delivered

From donation to distribution

ANALYSES

Samples are sent to the qualification laboratory. All donations are tested.

FRACTIONATION

Plasma is sent to fractionation plants. These high-tech plants extract the proteins and use them to manufacture medications.

FREEZING

Plasma is quickly frozen after collection. The faster it is frozen, the more protein can be extracted from it.

The drug manufacturing process can take up to 12 months.

RETURN OF PRODUCTS AND STORAGE

The finished products are then returned to Héma-Québec and stored, ready for shipment to hospitals.

DONATION

Plasma donations are collected in donor centres by appointment. The collection lasts approximately 45 minutes. Plasma can be donated every six days, up to 50 times a year.

DELIVERY

The products are delivered to hospitals.

STEM CELLS

Many people depend on a stem cell transplant to survive. For three out of four of them, there is no compatible donor in the family. Consequently, the Stem Cell Donor Registry and the Public Cord Blood Bank become the only hope for these patients to find a compatible donor.

Stem cell donor registry

Héma-Québec is responsible for recruiting and qualifying donors, as well as managing the Stem Cell Donor Registry for Québec.

This computerized registry contains the records of nearly 54,000 enrolled individuals who have consented to donating if they are found to be compatible with a patient. Héma-Québec's Registry is certified as meeting the highest international standards and is part of the World Marrow Donor Association's (WMDA) global network, thus benefitting from access to almost 38 million potential stem cell donors.

53,954
registered donors

1,352
donors added during the year

129
patients in Québec received an unrelated donor transplant (including 13 from cord blood)

15
donors in Québec donated stem cells (2 of these donations were destined for patients in Québec hospitals)

534
autologous peripheral stem cells distributed to hospitals

Stem cell donation: step by step

REGISTRATION

Any person who qualifies can enrol in the Registry. They will receive a buccal swab collection kit in the mail.

DETERMINATION OF GENETIC PROFILE AND ADDITION TO THE REGISTRY

Samples returned to Héma-Québec are used to determine the genetic profile of the potential donor, who is then added to the international registry.

CONFIRMATION OF COMPATIBILITY

If a person is potentially compatible with a patient, Héma-Québec conducts advanced tests to confirm their genetic compatibility with the patient.

The potential donor meets with the physician who will collect the stem cells for a general physical examination several weeks before the donation.

PREPARING FOR THE DONATION

The potential donor undergoes a general physical examination to confirm whether their health status allows them to donate.

STEM CELL DONATION

If all conditions are met, the donation can take place. Two types of donations are possible: bone marrow or peripheral stem cells.

POST-DONATION FOLLOW-UP

The donor is followed up until full recovery.

Public cord blood bank

Umbilical cord blood is very rich in stem cells. The Public Cord Blood Bank (PCBB) provides access to a complementary source of stem cells, other than those from bone marrow or peripheral blood. Like Héma-Québec's registry of adult donors, the PCBB is an integral part of the international registry of the World Marrow Donor Association.

While Héma-Québec is responsible for donor registration and qualification, the collection itself is done in nine partner hospitals. Upon receipt of the collected cord blood, Héma-Québec processes, analyzes and cryopreserves, or banks the cord blood units. It is the first operational public cord blood bank in Canada.

2,784
mothers enrolled

12
units distributed worldwide in 2021–2022 (including 4 in Québec)

11,917
units available for transplant

193
units distributed worldwide since 2008

9
partner hospitals (2 in operation)

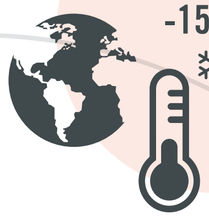
Cord blood, from donation to transplantation

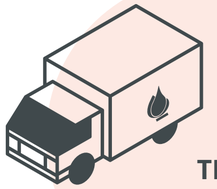
QUALIFICATION

Cord blood is qualified based on strict criteria.

PROCESSING AND STORAGE

Cord blood is processed, frozen at -150°C and stored for 15 years. The units of cord blood are made available to an international registry.





TRANSPORTATION

Cord blood is transported to Héma-Québec.

Mothers enrol after receiving information from their family physician during their pregnancy follow-up.

SEARCH FOR COMPATIBLE UNITS

When a call is received within Québec or elsewhere in the world, Héma-Québec conducts a search for a unit that is compatible with a patient awaiting a stem cell transplant.

DONATION

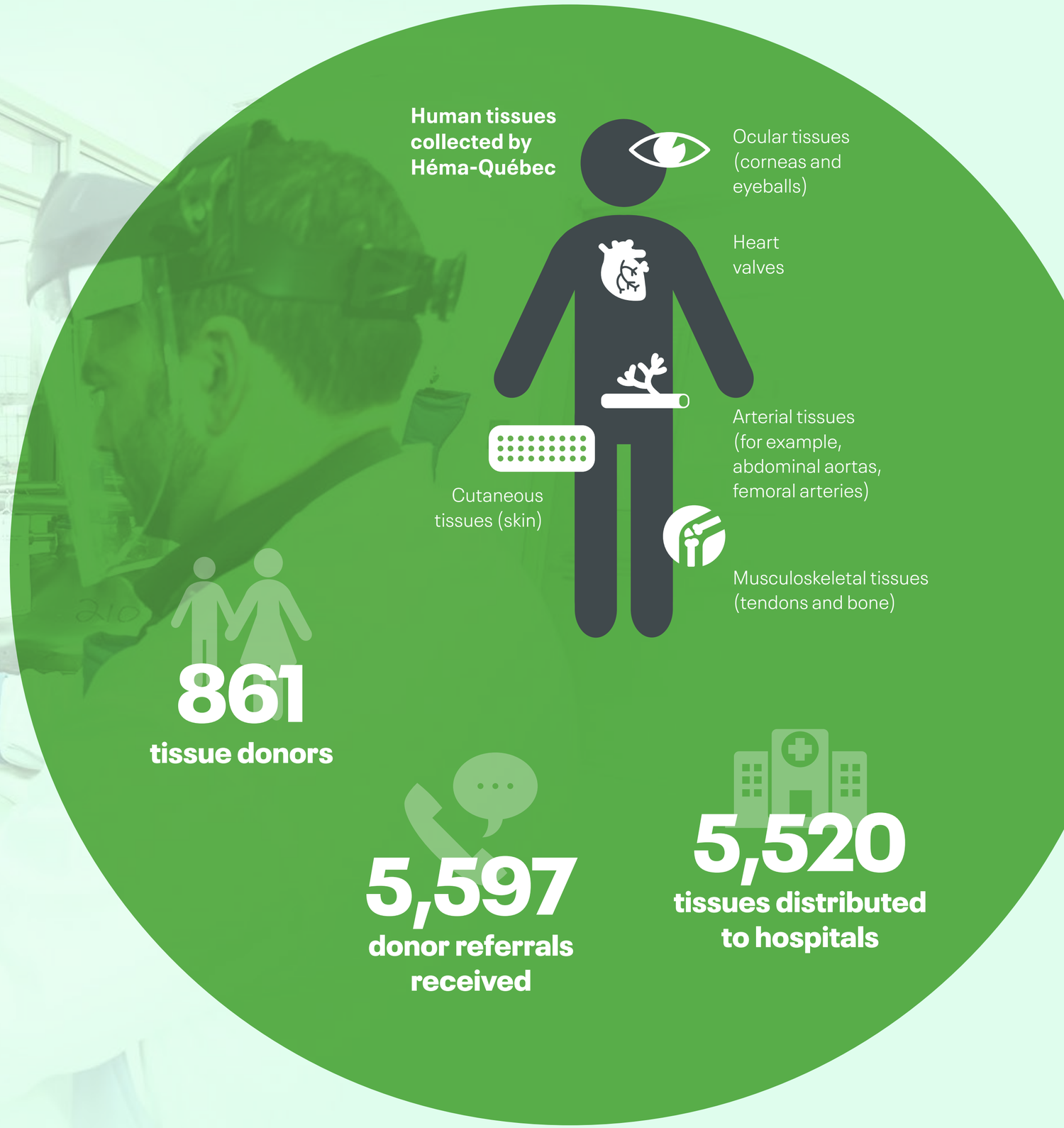
Cord blood is collected after the birth of a baby in partner hospitals.

TRANSPLANTATION

The patient is transplanted.

HUMAN TISSUES

Héma-Québec manages the only public human tissue bank in Québec. The bank is responsible for collecting, processing, qualifying and distributing human tissues to meet the needs of hospitals. One of the team's missions is to raise awareness among healthcare professionals of the importance of identifying and referring potential donors following their death.



From donor referrals to transplantation

DONOR REFERRAL

Health professionals refer donors to Héma-Québec.

CONSENT

Consent registries are checked. Whether the consent is entered in the registry or not, it is important for the donor to share their decision to consent to donating tissue with family members, since they are the ones who speak on behalf of the donor after death.

QUALIFICATION

Héma-Québec conducts a thorough evaluation to verify the donor's eligibility.

COLLECTION

Héma-Québec collects the tissues.

PROCESSING AND STORAGE

The tissues are processed and stored until they are transplanted. Most tissues can be preserved for up to five years, with the exception of corneas, which can be preserved only for 14 days.

TRANSPLANTATION

The surgeon transplants the tissues. One donor of human tissues can help up to 20 people.

Donating human tissues gives a new breath of life.

MOTHER'S MILK

Héma-Québec operates Québec's only Public Mothers' Milk Bank. Its mandate is to provide pasteurized human milk to infants born preterm at 32 weeks' gestation or earlier who require medical care and whose mother cannot breastfeed. The organization is responsible for donor recruitment and qualification, the processing and analysis of milk, as well as its distribution to hospitals.

731
registered donors

23,362
bottles distributed

From donation to distribution

DONATION

Héma-Québec supplies bottles; mothers collect their milk at home and freeze it.

PICK-UP OR DROP-OFF

Depending on the region, the bottles of milk are collected at the donor's home or brought by the donor to a drop-off point.

POOLING OF DONATIONS

Héma-Québec mixes the donations of several donors by lot.

PASTEURIZATION

The milk is pasteurized to eliminate viruses and bacteria.

MICROBIOLOGICAL ANALYSES AND STORAGE

Héma-Québec tests the milk to ensure that it is safe for recipients. If the results are compliant, the milk is frozen and stored for one year from the date of the first donation.

DELIVERY

The milk is distributed to hospitals and given to extremely preterm babies who cannot be breastfed by their mother.

Each year in Québec, about 1,000 premature babies whose mother cannot breastfeed benefit from milk donated to Héma-Québec's Public Mothers' Milk Bank.

SPECIALIZED LABORATORY SERVICES

In addition to meeting the needs of the Québec population as a supplier of biological products of human origin, Héma-Québec provides specialized laboratory services to its Québec healthcare system partners. In this role, it is recognized as a referral centre in the field of transfusion medicine.

4,913
patient requests referred to the reference laboratory

25,396
phenotyped packed red blood cells delivered to Québec hospitals

From request to specialized products and services

REPORT

Once the tests are completed, the results are sent to the health professional who initiated the request.

SPECIALIZED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Based on the results, the health professional contacts Héma-Québec to find an adult donor or cord blood units for stem cell transplantation, or to provide specialized products, such as phenotyped packed red blood cells, washed blood, rare blood or typed platelets.

ANALYSES

Based on the type of request received, various tests may be performed, including identifying irregular antibodies, phenotyping, genotyping, and HLA typing.

Specialized laboratory services provide solutions to complex transfusion medicine issues.

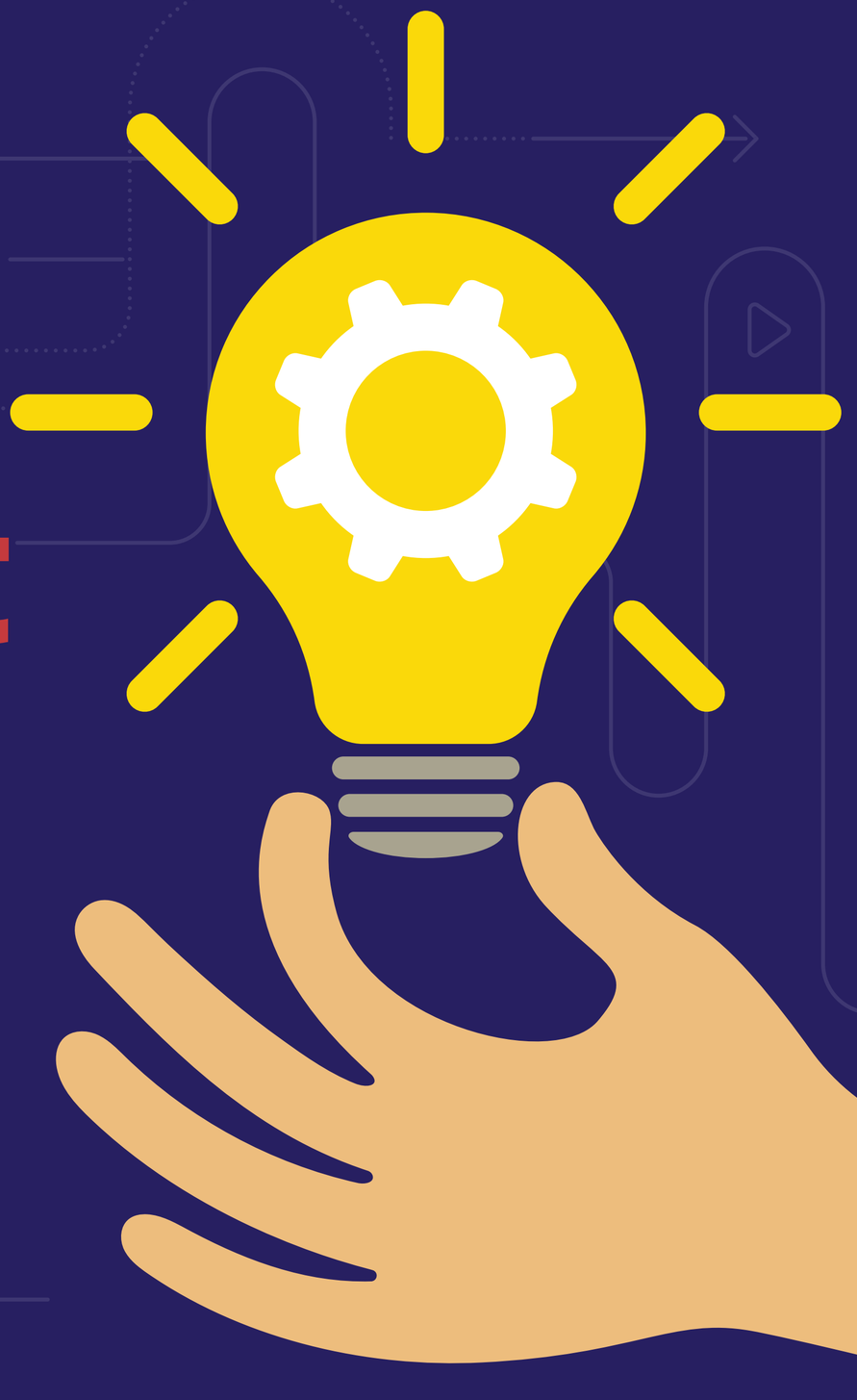
SCREENING OF STEM CELL AND BLOOD PRODUCT DONORS

To ensure the supply of specialized products, the reference laboratories constantly perform screening tests of Stem Cell Registry donors, cord blood units and blood product donors to find a compatible person willing to donate.

REQUESTS AND SAMPLES

Health professionals send requests for testing and samples to the reference laboratories.

Innovation, continuous improvement and research



Improving the donor experience

Booking an appointment: an unqualified success

Initiated in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, appointments were received enthusiastically by donors, volunteers and staff involved in managing donations. Accordingly, the decision was taken to make this measure permanent in September 2021.

Appointments offer many benefits by providing better predictability of the quantity and nature of the donations to come. From a donor perspective, it makes donating easier and reduces wait times. For volunteers and personnel, it optimizes staff management, ensures a more constant flow of donors and makes it possible to assess the performance of blood drives ahead of time. It is also easier to develop effective recruitment strategies and, especially, to reduce the number of "low supply" alerts – all to the benefit of the Québec population.

JeDonne now provides access to blood drives

In the past, the JeDonne app was limited to permanent centres. Now this online appointment booking tool has been expanded to enable donors to reserve a spot at blood drives. Donors can now manage their appointments—with access to real-time booking availability—for all types of donations from the comfort of their computer, phone or tablet. The geolocation function also facilitates the process by enabling donors to locate the blood drive closest to their home or workplace. Access to the donation history, personalized profile and reminder notices has also had a positive impact on the frequency and regularity of donations.

Expansion of the JeDonne app to include blood drives, in effect since October 12, 2021, quickly generated positive returns. In less than six months, 31,841 new accounts were created, and 94,105 appointments were made using the app (from October 12, 2021, to March 31, 2022). In all, the cumulative number of appointments more than doubled since the end of the previous fiscal year. This rapid increase is expected to continue as we complete the first annual cycle of blood drives.

New donor management program expanded to blood drives

In response to data showing that 50% of donors fail to return after their first five donations, a new donor management program was implemented during the previous fiscal year, originally only in PLASMAVIE and GLOBULE donor centres. Its goal is to retain these donors by convincing them to adopt long-term donation habits and offering an unparalleled experience at all points of contact, from the moment of donation to follow-up emails and phone calls. To achieve this, a standard welcoming process was developed, along with by targeted donation communications.

Following a test phase conducted in summer 2021, the program was rolled out to blood drives in spring 2022. As the program was implemented, the approach was refined to customize the experience even more. For example, promotional items were offered to donors, and appreciation messages from recipients were sent to mark important milestones in their first donor experiences.

This retention objective is to stimulate donor pride and develop a reflex to donate over the long term, as well as encouraging donors to become donation ambassadors among their family members and peer groups.

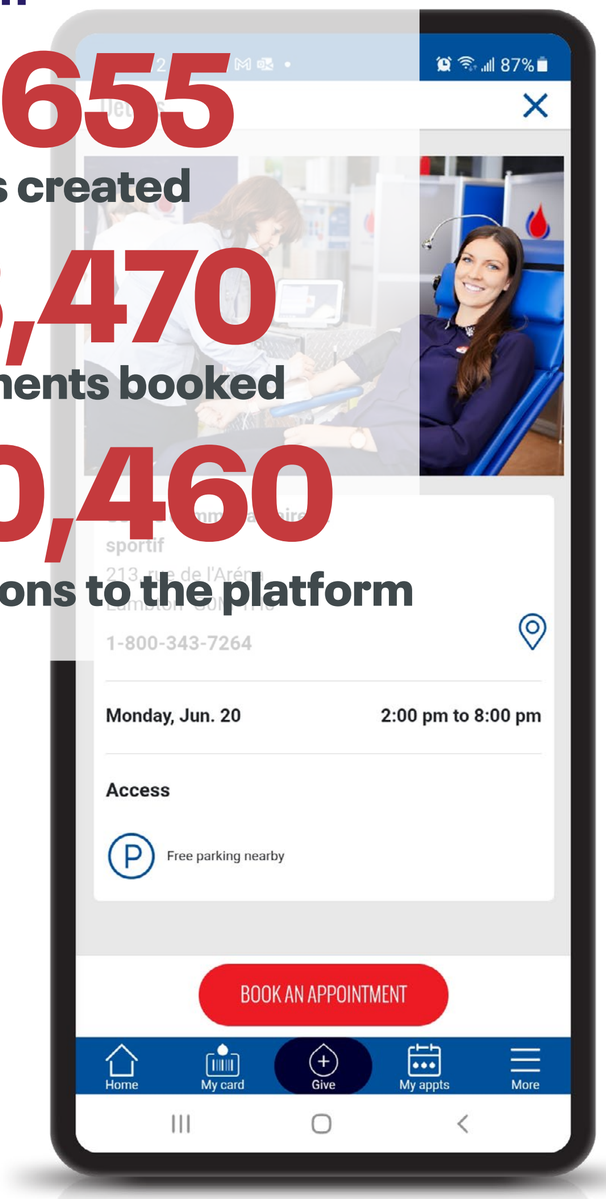
JeDonne: 2021–2022 results

More than

45,655
accounts created

158,470
appointments booked

420,460
connections to the platform



Continuous improvement

Project to digitize and automate customer orders

The new digitization and automation system for customer orders originating from hospitals was launched in early June 2021. The main goals of this technology project, which is a part of Héma-Québec's initiative to use digital technologies to improve communication with its partners, are to reduce errors and automate certain repetitive tasks, thereby increasing productivity and enabling staff to dedicate more time to value-added activities.

A first component of the project computerized customer requests—received by fax from hospitals—using character recognition software that automatically filled in digital forms used by Héma-Québec to fill these orders. A second component consisted of implementing a software solution to enter the data from these forms into the order management system (eProgesa).

The first phase of implementation, currently limited to labile blood products (platelets, packed red blood cells and frozen products), has significantly reduced the time required to enter orders, from 5 minutes to just 1.5 minutes per order. The number of errors, which is relatively stable at present, is expected to decrease as the staff becomes more familiar with this new approach.

Another undeniable benefit of this new automated process is that it makes telework possible for the employees involved.

Telework policy

Telework, which became necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic, has demonstrated its viability and appeal to a vast majority of staff over the past two years. An extensive internal survey revealed that 98% of Héma-Québec's employees enjoyed the experience and 48% would like to continue teleworking full-time, while 43% prefer a hybrid formula. A telework policy was developed to provide a framework for this way of working that has now spread throughout society. The policy is scheduled to come into effect in spring 2022, depending on the evolution of the public health situation. With this new policy, Héma-Québec is adapting to the needs expressed by its employees by offering them a maximum amount of flexibility within an adjustable and adaptive framework.

Scientific research

The teams of the offices of the vice presidents, Medical Affairs and Innovation, and Transfusion Medicine, continued to initiate research and development activities, while providing support and playing an advisory role to Héma-Québec's operations. These teams have contributed to positioning the organization as a model of innovation internationally for all activities related to its areas of operations.

Research and innovation during a pandemic

In 2021–2022, the office of the Vice President, Medical Affairs and Innovation, devoted a major portion of its activities to the COVID-19 pandemic, participating actively in several studies and partnerships related to this public health crisis. (See the section titled "Strategic partnerships within the healthcare system," page 30 for further details on this work.)

Continuing efforts related to the pandemic

As the public health crisis persisted, our Office of Research continued to provide expertise and facilities to public health. Research projects linked to COVID-19 were completed. Among these, phases 3 and 4 of the seroprevalence of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 study provided a more accurate picture of the epidemiological situation, providing support for public authorities' decisions on managing the pandemic.

In tandem with these demanding projects, the teams of the Office of the Vice President, Medical Affairs and Innovation, pursued their current innovation and development activities and support of the organization's product lines and services. These activities include many projects dealing with labile blood products, stem cells, mother's milk and human tissues.

PlasCov: A biobank for generations to come

Héma-Québec launched a major initiative with the launch and implementation of PlasCov, a biobank of plasma samples that will improve understanding of the evolution of the immune response to SARS-CoV-2, especially in a post-vaccination context. Samples stored in our new biobank are an invaluable reference base. They will also be a source of data that the scientific community can use in future studies, to the benefit of the entire Québec population.

In its second year of publication, Héma-Québec's Scientific Activities Report presents an overview of all the studies and projects conducted from April 2020 to March 2021. Consult the report here to learn more about our achievements.

Strategic partnerships within the health system

Partnerships during a pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity to further emphasize the importance of Héma-Québec's role in the many strategic partnerships within the health and scientific research community. While maintaining our organization at the forefront of the progress achieved in its field of activity, these successful collaborations highlight the knowledge and expertise of its teams.

Seroprevalence studies (phases 3 and 4)

At the request of the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Héma-Québec continued to collaborate with the INSPQ (Institut national de santé publique du Québec) in partnership with the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force (CITF) to conduct large-scale studies among its donors. As in the first and second waves of the pandemic, these studies were primarily aimed at estimating the proportion of the Québec population that had contracted SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19.

Since blood drives are held across Québec, blood donors form a group that is representative of the general population. Héma-Québec is in an ideal position to carry out such studies because it already systematically collects samples from each blood donation and has the laboratories and expertise to test them. A first study of this type, called a seroprevalence study, was conducted after the first wave in spring 2020, followed by a second phase, conducted between January 25 and March 11, 2021.

A transitional phase

Phase 3 of the seroprevalence studies, conducted in summer 2021, marked a change in the approach taken. For the first time, plasma samples from the new PlasCov biobank were studied in tandem with blood samples. The plasma samples have the advantage of coming from donors who make regular donations. It was therefore possible to compare the data over different periods to obtain a clearer picture of the evolution of the contamination within the population, including for the pre- and post-vaccination periods.

In addition to evaluating seroprevalence, this third component was aimed at distinguishing the response attributable to an infection from the response obtained after vaccination, since a high proportion of the population had been vaccinated. At the end of the third wave, the results showed that nearly 90% of participants had developed antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, in large part because of vaccination, while a much lower proportion could be attributed to infection.

A more targeted fourth phase

From the start of 2022 to mid-March, Phase 4 was entirely conducted with samples of plasma from the PlasCov biobank. This made it possible to identify antibodies present solely in persons recently infected with SARS-CoV-2 by comparing the level of antibodies in two samples at different times for the same individual.

The results established that 27.8% of the Québec population, or almost one out of every three persons, had contracted COVID-19 during the two and a half months of the study. This measure presents an extremely revealing picture of the increase in transmissibility of the virus associated with the emergence of the Omicron variant.

PlasCov biobank project

Before the vaccination program in Québec was rolled out in March 2021, Héma-Québec began a true race against the clock to ensure that it had reference samples to be able to make post-vaccination comparisons. Since plasma donors make donations at a much more regular frequency than blood donors, their samples represented an extremely valuable source of data for researchers. Accordingly, the decision was made to create the new PlasCov biobank to collect and preserve these plasma samples as material for future studies.

This project, set up in a matter of months, was very successful with donors, enabling PlasCov to gather more than 120,000 samples in less than a year. With the help of this vast reference base, Phase 4 of the prevalence studies was able to generate results of unprecedented accuracy in terms of infection within an entire population. In the coming years, the PlasCov biobank will be an indispensable tool to track the evolution of the effects of vaccination on the pandemic and conduct subsequent research on related topics.

Other partnerships

In the past year, Héma-Québec's scientific teams pooled their expertise with that of external collaborators, leading to the publication of 16 scientific articles related to the pandemic and immunity against COVID-19.

Seroprevalence studies have provided results that have been crucial for public health authorities in managing the pandemic.

The power of partnerships in fulfilling our mission

Partnerships for blood and plasma donations

The establishment of partnerships plays a vital role in mobilizing existing donors and recruiting new ones. Many types of partners collaborate with Héma-Québec to ensure a sufficient supply of blood products.

For example, many private and public organizations encourage their staff to take part in blood drives , either external or held within their facilities. Community or social groups, for their part, can integrate blood drives into their regular activities or appeal to their volunteers to organize drives. Police and fire services are also valued partners in encouraging the gift of life.

In 2021–2022, 1,424 blood drives were organized through the collaboration of organizing committees in private and public organizations, schools and community groups

Moreover, many organizations mobilize their teams as part of promotional and recruitment activities aimed at encouraging people to donate at one of Héma-Québec's donor centres. Across Québec, businesses and associations help us to improve the daily lives of patients by creating a partnership with us. These collaborations greatly help raise people's awareness of blood and plasma donation. They form an essential pillar upon which Héma-Québec depends to fulfill its primary mission, year after year.

Targeted mobilization for plasma donation

Student groups at colleges and universities, as well as regional businesses, are important partners of plasma donation, a type of donation that is done solely in Héma-Québec's GLOBULE and PLASMAVIE donor centres. At the school level, this can consist of organizing friendly competitions between faculties or mobilizing sports teams. In 2021–2022, many organizations were approached in outlying areas and responded positively to the call. Their support is vital in helping increase plasma self-sufficiency in Québec, a priority goal of Héma-Québec's strategy.

More than one in four new donors in PLASMAVIE centres came from a partnership.

During the fiscal year, 1,665 individuals donated plasma for the first time in all four PLASMAVIE centres, and 27% of these donors were attributed to partnerships.

Partnerships for the supply of human tissues

Mandate as the sole distributor of human tissues

Twenty years after initiating its tissue collection and preparation activities, Héma-Québec has been entrusted with exclusive management of the supply of human tissues for the entire healthcare network by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. To date, our organization has supplied a little more than 50% of these products, the remainder being purchased from international suppliers. To assume these new responsibilities that are essential to its mission, Héma-Québec will implement a new optimized international purchasing system and a centralized product tracing register, in line with a recommendation formulated by the Biovigilance Committee. A two-year transition period is in effect to enable hospitals to align their procurement processes with this system.

For Héma-Québec, the objective remains to increase self-sufficiency in human tissues to meet the needs of Québec more efficiently and at a lower cost.

A first regional partnership for human tissues

In partnership with the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean, Héma-Québec deployed a specialized resource to manage human tissues for the first time. As part of this pilot project begun in December 2021, a professional from Héma-Québec's human tissues team is now working on site to support the region's six hospitals. This person primarily identifies potential cornea donors and looks after related collection activities. The supply of corneas presents a constant challenge since their shelf life is limited to 14 days post-collection. This type of partnership helps reinforce Héma-Québec's ability to meet the ever-increasing needs of the healthcare network.

Extension of the model to the Chaudière-Appalaches region

Through a collaboration agreement with the Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de Chaudière-Appalaches, a recruitment and tissue collection officer from Héma-Québec will start work in fall 2022. The goal will be to identify potential tissue donors in the region. This new officer will have the same duties as the professional in the Saguenay and will act closely with health professionals to seamlessly coordinate all the steps in the referral process and, ultimately, the donation. This individual will be responsible for identifying potential cases in the region and providing the grieving families with information on the process used to collect human tissues. This role is vital since it saves on the precious, limited time corneas can be preserved before they are transplanted.

Other partnerships for the supply of human tissues

To obtain an optimal number of human tissue donor referrals, Héma-Québec is pursuing collaborative agreements with several other strategic partners in the healthcare network.

Partnership with the Bureau du coroner

The presence of Héma-Québec liaison officers in the Bureau du coroner makes it possible to quickly connect with the families of recently deceased individuals during events requiring the intervention of a coroner. This close collaboration significantly reduces the time needed to obtain permission to collect human tissues, maximizing their potential for transplantation.

The addition of a second liaison officer, at the end of last fiscal year, produced excellent results. An increased number of files consulted in the coroners' case management system (GECCO) generated a

greater number of requests to the Bureau du coroner and families, leading to an increased number of tissues collected from donors. Collections rose from 155 (in 2021) to 223 (in 2022).

Proportion of donors from deaths flagged at the Bureau du coroner

	2020–2021	2021–2022
Ocular	20%	25%
Cardiovascular	65%	71%
Skin	35%	37%
Bone	47%	61%
Tendon	59%	69%

Partnership with Urgences-santé

Collaboration with Urgences-santé, consisting of identifying and referring potential human tissue donors following their death, continues, with the goal of maximizing the number of referrals. In the past year, 227 donors were referred to Héma-Québec, representing 23% fewer referrals compared with the previous year. This reduction is comparable to that observed in the province's general and specialized care institutions.

Partnership with the Clinical Coordination Unit for Pre-hospital Emergency

During 2021–2022, the nursing staff of the Clinical Coordination Unit for Pre-hospital Emergency (UCCSPU) referred 990 donors to Héma-Québec. This represents an 18% increase compared with the previous year. These results are largely attributable to the systemization of the referral process.

Furthermore, based on the collaboration established with the UCCSPU, a nurse may now communicate with the grieving family and offer the option of tissue donation in the absence of a decision in the consent registers to organ and tissue donation. The positive impacts on this major step for the supply of human tissues are beginning to be noticed.

Partnership with the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal

After two years of decreased referrals because of the pandemic, the partnership established with the CHUM regained momentum at the end of the fiscal year, with a return to the levels observed prior to the arrival of COVID-19.

Working group for better management of heart tissue

To increase the recruitment of heart tissue donors, a committee was formed in December, made up of representatives from Héma-Québec, the Association des pathologistes du Québec, the Bureau du coroner, pathologists from the IUCPQ, CHUM and MUHC, as well as from the LSJML (Laboratoire des sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale). This group identified solutions to facilitate the collection of pulmonary valves, while enabling the pathologist and coroner to properly identify the cause of death using residual heart tissue. Substantive work has been done in terms of increasing the number of viable tissues that could be freed up for patients awaiting a transplant, with promising results.

Testing services for Transplant Québec

Héma-Québec's specialized laboratories support Transplant Québec by conducting qualification tests to determine whether an organ donor candidate is a carrier of communicable blood-borne infections. These tests, which use specialized equipment and reagents not found in hospitals, must be done quickly, before the organs are collected for transplantation. In 2021–2022, Héma-Québec tested 134 samples for Transplant Québec.

"Urgent" and "non-urgent" qualifiers were introduced by Transplant Québec during the previous fiscal year. Since then, only results for samples qualified as urgent must be provided by Héma-Québec within eight hours. This new approach has resulted in a sharp decrease in the number of tests performed outside of regular business hours, from 74% in the past to 21% today. This results in lower costs for Transplant Québec, along with improvements to the working conditions of laboratory technicians who are on call.

Stem cell partnerships

Partnership with ExCellThera

The Québec company ExCellThera was created in the wake of a major scientific breakthrough in 2013 at the Université de Montréal's Institute of Research in Immunology and Cancer (IRIC). It was discovered that treating cord blood with the molecule UM171 helped stem cells to multiply. This process holds great potential, compensating for one of the limitations of using cord blood, namely the small quantity of stem cells it contains compared with collecting them from an adult donor.

Héma-Québec contributes to the growth of biotechs and has a direct impact on the life sciences in Québec.

Héma-Québec began a partnership with ExCellThera to support its clinical trial to study the treatment of high-risk blood cancer patients. Its role involved implementing a cord blood search and selection service and providing the necessary logistics to supply Québec and U.S. transplant physicians participating in the trial with multiplied units of cord blood.

FACT accreditation with the CHUM

Close collaboration has existed for several years between Héma-Québec and the CHUM (Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal), a client of Héma-Québec's peripheral autologous stem cell cryopreservation service. In 2022, the two institutions continued their joint effort to present their respective requests for accreditation to the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT).

Héma-Québec views this accreditation process as an opportunity to show, once again, its commitment to quality. The FACT accreditation will certify the quality standards of all manufacturing and cryopreservation processes for products from apheresis donations. This shared certification will foster the development of an even greater partnership between the two institutions. The improvements made will also benefit the three other autologous stem cell transplant centres that use Héma-Québec's stem cell laboratory, i.e., the Hôpital Général Juif, the CHUS Fleurimont and the Hôpital Sacré-Cœur.

Management mandate of the SIIATH (Système d'information intégré sur les activités transfusionnelles et d'hémovigilance)

Since May 2018, the Office of the Vice President, Information Technology and Digital Strategy, has been responsible for the operational management of the SIIATH for the entire healthcare network. This software solution is key to managing inventories of blood products, from their receipt by hospitals to their transfusion. It ensures traceability of all the transfusion activities of Québec's blood banks.

As part of its mandate with the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Héma-Québec continued updating and migrating the SIIATH toward a new private cloud-based platform. This migration has been completed in 91 of the 93 hospitals operating blood banks in the Québec network. The project will be completed in 2022, and a new phase in the evolution of the system will follow.

Since July 2021, Héma-Québec has also been responsible for technical and application support to the Sommaire transfusionnel (ST) platform, a Web-based application used by hospital blood banks to provide the transfusion history of users and facilitate the exchange of information between institutions across the province.

Association des bénévoles du don de sang

The Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) plays a vital role in Héma-Québec's mission to ensure a stable and sufficient supply of blood products for the Québec population. The participation of these volunteers in donor recruitment has proven even more invaluable during the pandemic.

The easing of safety measures and the return of activities at some locations, such as college and university campuses, has enabled the ABDS to significantly intensify its recruitment activities. Nearly 635 booths were set up during blood drives and another 110 at pre-collection locations, resulting in more than 32,000 appointments booked by donors. Among them, 50% returned for an additional donation later in the year. This statistic is especially important since returning donors are a key element of the strategy for managing new donors.

Launched in the middle of the pandemic, the ABDS's youth wing continued to grow in 2021–2022. The number of young ambassadors between the ages of 18 and 30 continued to increase, reaching 130 on March 31, 2022. The aim of this strategic and foundational project is to prepare the next generation and raise awareness among young people about the various types of donations. The ambassadors received training and completed several projects to recruit blood, plasma, platelet and stem cell donors.

Fondation Héma-Québec

The Fondation Héma-Québec organizes fundraising events and provides financial support to Héma-Québec's innovative and strategic projects in its various sectors of activity, including blood products, stable products, stem cells, human tissues and mother's milk. Its main area of intervention is supporting the ABDS in its mission to recruit new donors and to raise public awareness of the importance of blood donation.

In 2021–2022, the Fondation concentrated its efforts on supporting the recruitment of new plasma donors, part of the strategic initiative launched by Héma-Québec against the backdrop of COVID-19. In the past year, the Fondation conducted a fundraising campaign that collected more than $260,000, with particular emphasis on plasma donation and mother's milk donation.

Our institutional partners

As part of its mission, Héma-Québec is mandated to develop and maintain partnerships that encourage the sharing of information and the advancement of knowledge and related techniques. The importance of these partnerships is enshrined in the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*, which states that the organization must "maintain links to ensure collaboration and the exchange of information with counterpart organizations in Canada and elsewhere, in order to be informed of and share expertise."

Héma-Québec wishes to recognize the many partners with whom it had the opportunity to collaborate during 2021–2022:

- AABB
- Alpha-1 Canada
- America's Blood Centers
- American Association of Tissue Banks
- American Red Cross
- American Society for Apheresis
- American Society of Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics
- Americas' SAP Users' Group
- AOH Québec
- Association d'anémie falciforme du Québec
- Association de thérapie génique du Québec
- Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS)
- Association des médecins hématologues et oncologues du Québec
- Association des patients immunodéficients du Québec (APIQ)
- Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP)
- Association professionnelle des Chargés de sécurité transfusionnelle (CST) du Québec (APCSTQ)
- Banque d'yeux du Centre universitaire en ophtalmologie
- Banque d'yeux du Québec
- Biomedical Excellence for Safer Transfusion
- Bureau du coroner
- Canadian Association for Porphyria
- Canadian Blood Services
- Canadian Hemophilia Society
- Canadian Hereditary Angioedema Network (CHAEN)
- Canadian Organ and Tissue Donors Association
- Canadian Society for Transfusion Medicine
- Canadian Standards Association
- Cell Therapy Transplant Canada (CTTC)
- Centre de recherche évaluative en santé (CRES)
- Centre de traitement des inhibiteurs
- Centre hospitalier universitaire de Montréal (CHUM)
- Chambre des notaires du Québec
- CIUSSS du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean
- COCQ-SIDA
- Comité consultatif national de médecine transfusionnelle
- Commission de la santé et des services sociaux des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador (CSSSPNQL)
- Consortium for Blood Group Genes
- Cord Blood Association
- Corporation des thanatologues du Québec
- de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Lévis
- Douglas – Bell Canada Brain Bank
- Établissement français du sang
- Fondation Héma-Québec
- Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies
- Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé
- Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT)
- Groupe de travail sur l'immunité face à la COVID-19 (GTIC)
- Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS)
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique
- Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ)
- Institut universitaire de cardiologie et de pneumologie de Québec (IUCPQ)
- International MakSystem User Group (IMUG)
- International Plasma Fractionator Association (IPFA)
- International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT)
- International Society of Hematology
- Laboratoire des sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale
- Leucan
- Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada
- Market Research Bureau (MRB)
- McMaster University
- Ministry of Health of Ontario
- Mitacs
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
- Network of Rare Blood Disorder Organizations (NRBDO)
- Ordre professionnel des technologistes médicaux du Québec : Formaline
- Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association (PPTA)
- Platelet Immunology Working Party (PIWP)
- Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)
- Regroupement des directeurs des cliniques des traitements de l'hémophilie du Québec
- Réseau de thérapie cellulaire, tissulaire et génique du Québec (ThéCell)
- Safe Blood for Africa Foundation
- Table de concertation en médecine transfusionnelle (TCMT)
- The Canadian Donation and Transplantation Research Program
- Toyota Canada
- Transplant Québec
- Unité de coordination clinique des services préhospitaliers d'urgence (UCCSPU)
- University of Alberta Hospital
- Urgences-santé
- World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH)
- World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA)

Thank you!

Risk management

Risk management during a pandemic

The safety and quality of distributed products and services provided are paramount. Héma-Québec manages risks in an integrated manner at all levels of the organization based on best practices.

Maintenance of activities

For a second consecutive year, crisis management to deal with the pandemic was at the heart of Héma-Québec's activities.

The ongoing crisis management program resulted in maintaining, evolving or rolling out various strategies to allow Héma-Québec to successfully ensure a sufficient and safe supply of blood products to the Québec population. Héma-Québec was able to continue carrying out its collection and distribution activities with continued efficiency during the first five waves of the pandemic. Activities that had to be temporarily slowed or suspended, such as the recruitment and qualification of donors of mother's milk, donor recruitment for the Stem Cell Donor Registry and the collection of certain types of human tissues, were reinstated. These interruptions or slowdowns did not significantly compromise Héma-Québec's ability to maintain an adequate level of service in the areas mentioned.

Numerous efficiency gains made during the pandemic represent assets whose positive benefits will surely continue to be felt when things eventually return to "normal."

Safety measures maintained

Since March 2020, activities at blood drives and permanent centres have been adapted to integrate an expanded range of preventive measures against COVID-19. To enable our blood collection operations to continue without interruption, the roll-out and application of these measures was revised as the recommendations of public health authorities evolved. Measures to ease restrictions, begun in June 2021, had to be tightened up again in December as the pandemic progressed.

Following are examples of some of the main measures implemented for blood drives and permanent centres and maintained throughout the fiscal year:

- Donations by appointment.
- Two-metre physical distancing in donor waiting areas and one-metre distancing in the collection area.
- Disinfection of hands at blood drive sites.
- Mandatory medical masks to be worn by everyone at all times.
- Plexiglass dividers at reception and registration stations.
- Exclusion of donors who failed to meet certain COVID-19-related criteria.
- Exclusion of companions at blood drive sites.

Changes to criteria

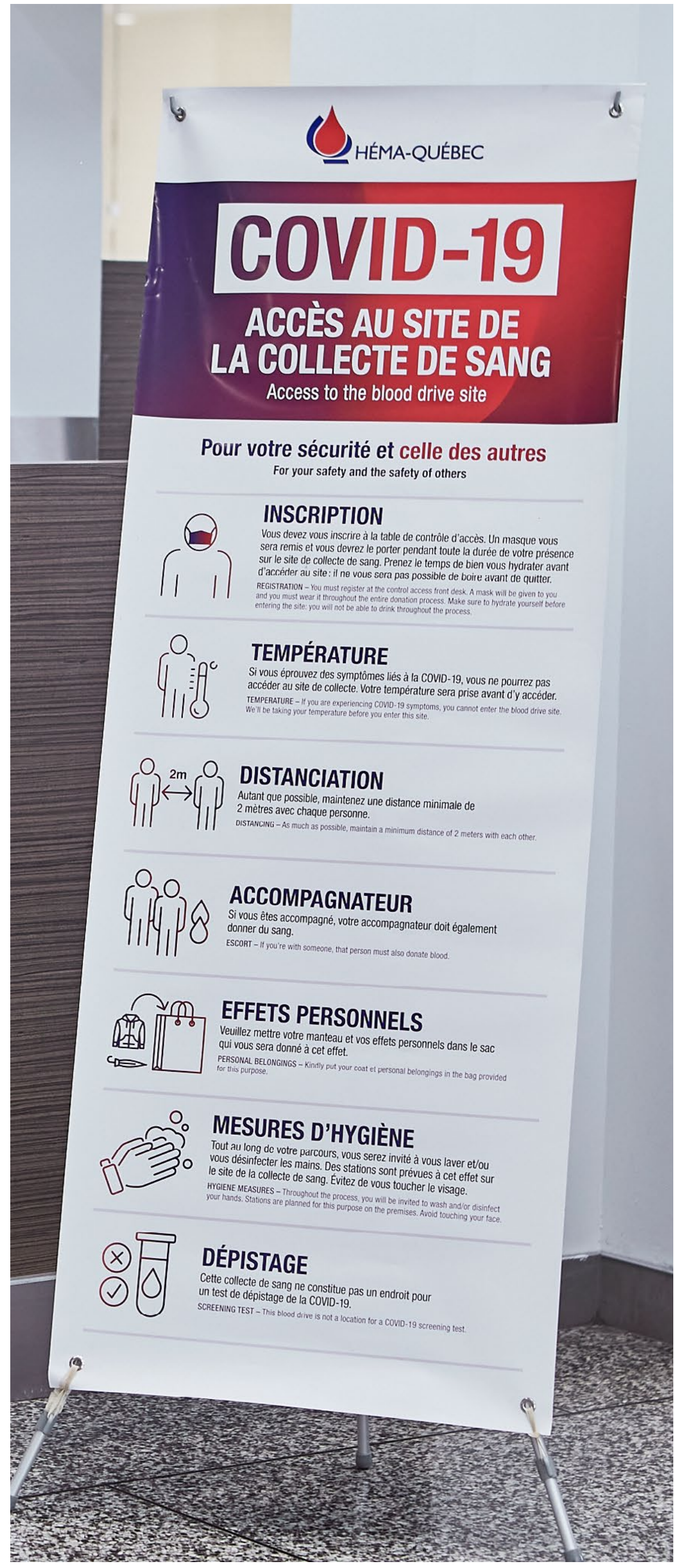
In April 2020, some selection criteria were temporarily eased. This measure was aimed at maintaining the blood supply at an adequate level during the pandemic. In October 2021, with the continued increase in the supply, certain criteria were put back into place. The wait time between donations returned to 56 days for men and 84 days for women.

These temporary changes were implemented after in-depth analyses that determined that they carried no significant risk for donors and recipients. The wait time requirement between donations is aimed mainly at frequent donors and women whose hemoglobin level is close to acceptable limits. To compensate for the application of this measure, a directive was issued, to the effect that, at the time of donation, staff members should stress the importance of taking iron supplements for the following people: women who made two ore more donations and men who made three or more donations.

Malaria: Ineligibility for short stays reduced to three months

After being reduced once from twelve to six months at the start of 2020, the temporary period of ineligibility to donate blood for persons who had travelled to countries where there is a risk of malaria was reduced again to three months in October 2021. This criterion applies to individuals whose stay in these countries was less than six months. Stays of more than six months continue to result in ineligibility for three years.

The decision to reduce the period of ineligibility for short stays is based on the most recent scientific and epidemiological data available. These data indicate that this change can be implemented without compromising the safety of the blood products since the probability of a post-transfusion infection is extremely low, i.e., virtually non-existent. Reducing the ineligibility period to three months does not, therefore, result in a significant



increase in risk. Since the mid-90s, no case has been reported in Canada, where the percentage of travellers to areas of highest risk is very low.

Increased demand for packed red blood cells

In fall 2021, an unforeseen increase in demand for O+ packed red blood cells, coupled with a combination of multiple factors, caused concern about the sufficiency of the inventory level for these products. In addition to collaborating with the MSSS and hospitals to ensure the stringent management of supply and demand, Héma-Québec undertook a series of actions to mitigate the risk associated with this one-off situation, starting with the implementation of various measures to increase donations. These measures included extending the business hours of the permanent centres, increasing telerecruitment resources and mass mailing emails to eligible donors, and proactive offensive to increase the visibility of the message on social media, radio and television through advertising and public relations.

Increasing the staff that processes donations in the laboratory on weekends also helped free up products more quickly.

These combined measures achieved the desired success, contributing to a rapid redress of the situation. Nevertheless, this episode underscored the need to improve communications between the various partners involved to equip all players with a better structured, concerted response system.

The management of intravenous immunoglobulins (IVIG) achieved its objectives

The pandemic showed the fragility of the plasma collection system in the United States, which supplies more than 70% of the plasma needed to manufacture IVIG. During the previous fiscal year, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux initiated a new approach to managing demand for these products. The idea was to structure and optimize their use by hospitals so that Héma-Québec could maintain the safety of the supply and respond adequately to all needs.

This initiative achieved excellent results, reaching the projected target of a 20% reduction in the volume of IVIG used, which contributed to ensuring the stability of the supply. The best practices put in place, along with a more appropriate use of this range of products, made it possible to establish a level of consumption per person comparable with that of other jurisdictions.

During the past fiscal year, Héma-Québec constantly monitored growth in demand to anticipate fluctuations more effectively and, as a result, has recommended continued use of the new approach.

SIGR (Système intégré de gestion des risques)

Héma-Québec's integrated risk management system (SIGR) was set up during previous fiscal years and is aimed at identifying, assessing and defining strategic operational risks to enable the organization to react quickly and effectively should such risks occur.

Risk management again proved its value in 2021–2022 against the backdrop of the pandemic. The relevance of the SIGR was clearly demonstrated as it contributed to the organization's rapid adaptation to the various issues raised by the successive phases of the pandemic, characterized this year by both the easing and tightening of restrictions.

Inspections and audits

Periodic inspections and audits of Héma-Québec's operational processes by regulatory agencies attest to the degree of quality control the organization exercises over its operations. Héma-Québec maintained its compliance status following various inspections carried out in 2021–2022.

Health Canada is working on updating its inspection strategy for licensed blood establishments, allowing for a reduction in the frequency of inspections of highly compliant establishments. This approach would favour establishments with a high degree of compliance, such as Héma-Québec, while providing for a high level of surveillance of deficient ones.

INSPECTIONS AND AUDITS

Activity sector or service	Agency	Scope	Date	Conclusion
Blood products	Health Canada	Québec City facility	June 2021	Establishment licences renewed in accordance with the *Blood Regulations*
		PLASMAVIE in Saguenay	January 2022	
		GLOBULE in Kirkland	January 2022	
		PLASMAVIE in Trois-Rivières	January 2022	
Reference laboratory	Bureau de normalisation du Québec	Immunology laboratory: patient analyses	May 2021	Certification renewed in compliance with ISO 15189 standard, medical laboratories
Stem cells	Health Canada	Public Cord Blood Bank	October 2021	Registration renewed in compliance with the *Safety of Human Cells, Tissues and Organs for Transplantation Regulations*
Information technology and digital strategy	Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux	Information security	August 2021	Declaration of compliance: annual self-evaluation of information security (report on the specific rule governing organizational security (RPSO))
Numerous services	Transport Canada	Transportation (packaging) of infectious substance samples	September 2021	Activities in compliance with the *Transportation of Dangerous Substances Regulation*

Hemovigilance of donors

Héma-Québec documents all reactions following a blood donation, regardless of their degree of severity. Adverse reactions occur rarely and, for the most part, are benign. Analyzing the data obtained makes it possible to adopt preventive measures to minimize reactions that may arise and foster a positive blood donation experience.

In 2021–2022, adverse reactions remained limited, confirming the sharp decrease in these reactions observed since 2020–2021. Adverse reactions were observed in 3.8% of 349,764 donations collected, and 92.2% of these were benign.

Overview of adverse reactions

Change in reactions of
0.9%
compared with the previous year

Reactions observed in
3.8%
donations

92.2%
of reactions were benign

Rate and type of complication possible per 100 donations

2.6
vasovagal reactions, 2.4 of which were mild

0.002
moderate or severe citrate reaction*

0.7
arm reaction (for example, hematoma, bruising, allergy)

* This reaction may occur solely during an apheresis donation.

Implementing a gender-neutral criterion: Health Canada gives the green light for plasma donations

In March 2022, Héma-Québec received authorization from Health Canada to begin transitioning to a gender-neutral questionnaire on risky behaviours for plasma donors. The measure is currently being implemented in anticipation of its launch in fall 2022. This first step will be followed by an extension to all types of donation (blood, plasma and platelet) in winter 2023, pending approval by Health Canada. Plasma donation will thus become more inclusive in Québec, without affecting the safety of recipients, and will enable a greater number of men who have sex with men to donate plasma.

This decision will allow Héma-Québec to do away with the current three-month ineligibility period to donate plasma for all sexually active men who have sex with men. Eligibility to donate plasma will be based instead on an evaluation of a person's individual risk behaviours rather than on the fact of belonging to a group considered at risk.

The new approach means that all individuals—regardless of sex or gender—who show up to give plasma will be asked whether they have had sex and, if so, will be asked about their recent sexual behaviour. Anyone who has had anal sex with a new partner or with numerous partners in the past three months will be ineligible to donate.

Donations confirmed positive by communicable disease marker

Héma-Québec tests all donations that it collects to detect blood-borne diseases. If a positive result is obtained, the donation is destroyed, and the donor is notified. The number of infections found in donors did not change significantly this year and is in line with the trend observed in recent years.

HIV	2
HCV	10
HBV	7
HTLV	3
Syphilis	14
Number of donations tested	**343,840**

Prevalence of HIV and HCV in donors compared with the population

The prevalence of HIV and HCV in blood donors remains largely below that observed in the population. These results show that the use of the blood donation qualification questionnaire is an effective safety measure.

PREVALENCE OF HIV AND HCV IN DONORS COMPARED WITH THE POPULATION

	Population	Héma-Québec
HIV	0.2% (1/500)	0.0006% (1/171,920)
HCV	0.8% (1/125)	0.0029% (1/34,384)

Managing talent and succession

Planning, acquiring, developing and mobilizing talent is a major concern in the current context. Optimizing the talent acquisition process is vital to insure the right person is, in the right role, at the right time. Faced with the risk of losing knowledge and organizational efficiency, an internal succession management program is just as vital to ensure that the right actions are taken.

In 2021–2022, a first annual review of talent in critical and key positions was carried out, helping to identify these positions. Sound governance in the face of the risk of losing knowledge and organizational efficacy is aimed at:

- retaining the best talent by providing individuals with opportunities to grow within the organization;
- identifying high performers and emerging leaders that we want to develop for the future;
- integrating succession management into other strategies;
- ensuring a comprehensive approach for Héma-Québec.

In this fiscal year, 23 critical positions and 31 key positions were identified. Meetings were organized with the holders of key and critical positions, and the potential employee succession was identified. Development plans and action plans for recruitment will begin in 2022–2023.

2021–2025 Strategic Plan report

1 Foundations

Solidify our foundations (quality, processes, technology, governance, risk assessment and audits)

PRIORITIES

1.1 | Quality and compliance – Adopt improved quality practices, including a compliance culture shift

A major initiative, the realignment of quality requirements, is under way to review our foundations for training, job descriptions and processes to ensure the enhancement of the quality culture. It also includes the addition of a qualified workforce to comply with the cycle times of quality events (non-compliances and CAPA). Other initiatives, such as remediation projects (quality and validation agreement) and the overhaul of the controlled document systems, are also under way.

1.2 | Technology – Acquire adapted, effective and safe technological solutions for our processes in line with our mission and support services, including the integrated management software package (PGI)

Many major technological projects have now been initiated, including upgrades to our eProgesa mission system and to the technological equipment used at blood drives. The upgrade to our integrated management software package (PGI/ERP) gathered momentum with a well-structured program. The launch roadmap has been completed, and the contracts with our solution suppliers (SAP) and system integrator firm are nearing finalization. The organization of the required resources and the governance of the PGI program, as well as the monitoring mechanism, are already in place in the various tactical and operational steering committees.

1.3 | Management – Improve our management methods and information

Roadmaps, which include performance indicators by product line aligned with best practices, have been launched and integrated into the tactical management activities. The governance structure, including the Office of Strategic Initiatives Portfolio Management, has been put in place, and the implementation plan for portfolio management has been released. The mandate of each of the authorities set out in the governance structure has been adjusted and communicated. The strategic initiatives portfolio roadmap has been developed and disseminated as well.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Compliance with prescribed quality event timelines	**Under control**	**45%**	100 %
Deployment of the new PGI	**Under control**	**10%**	80%
Deployment of a dashboard to evaluate the performance of the various activity sectors	**Under control**	**40%**	100 %
Deployment of the office of strategic initiatives	**Under control**	**80%**	100 % (end of 2022)

1 Foundations (cont'd)

Solidify our foundations (quality, processes, technology, governance, risk assessment and audits)

PRIORITIES

1.4 | Supply – Optimize key supply processes

Upgrades to the various procurement processes, already well under way, continued as planned. The processes have been mapped, work instructions have been put in place, and training has been launched.

1.5 | Governance – Optimize governance

A review of Héma-Québec's governance was initiated. The first stage, which dealt with the evaluation of the operations of the Board of Directors (BoD) and its committees, has been completed, based on best practices. Some recommendations have already been retained and applied or are in progress. The second stage of the governance review, which will deal specifically with the overhaul of the general rules, will begin in 2023.

1.6 | Risk management – Adopt a fully integrated risk management system

The deployment of an integrated risk management system continued, with the adoption of six of the twelve constituent subsystems. The organization also established an integrated risk management committee, whose mandate provides for accountability to the Executive Committee and the Audit Committee of Héma-Québec's BoD.

1.7 | Internal audit function – Proceed with the development of the internal audit function

A first step in the development of the internal audit function was achieved with the creation of the Office of Internal Audit and the position of Director, Internal Audit. An individual experienced in regulatory auditing and performance and process auditing was hired to fill this position.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Deployment of a service offering for the internal audit function	**Under control**	**33%**	100% (in 2023)
Updating of Héma-Québec's general regulations in line with best practices	**Under control**	**0%**	100% (in 2024)

2 Plasma self-sufficiency and safe product supply

Ensure an optimal supply of our products and increase self-sufficiency

PRIORITIES

2.1 | Plasma self-sufficiency – Implement the plasma self-sufficiency program

The adoption of strategies aimed at increasing plasma self-sufficiency continues on a planned basis. The optimization of current centres is under way. Two new centres are also preparing to open in 2022 and 2023. Various other initiatives, consisting of technology assesments, are also under way, in collaboration with our research and development teams. This will enable us to remain on the leading edge of technology.

2.2 | Human tissues – Identify and deploy human tissue development projects

Héma-Québec is actively preparing for the deployment of its unique human tissue distributor mandate, granted by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS). Various projects to improve processes and technologies are under way. The line of human tissue products has been prioritized on the new PGI's launch roadmap. In addition, the work of Héma-Québec's researchers has led to the development of sophisticated production processes. Through these processes, the human tissue product line's performance has been confirmed in various in vitro and in vivo tests.

2.3 | Supply – Enhance planning and supply processes

Strategic, tactical and operational processes continued to evolve this year. Robust planning cycles aligned with best practices have already been launched for labile blood products, mother's milk, human tissues and other stable products, and are currently being mapped out in other activity sectors.

2.4 | Blood drive operations – Review the planning of blood drives and the deployment of stable teams

The design of an automated planning process and the choice of a technology able to better evaluate load capacity have been completed. Configuration and release are to come.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Percentage of plasma self-sufficiency	**To be monitored**	**30.6%**	42%
Strategic planning cycle performed each quarter for all activity sectors (in compliance with the deployment timeline)	**Under control**	**80%**	Strategic planning cycle performed quarterly for all activity sectors

3 Donor experience and partners

Mobilize Québec society to support Héma-Québec's mission

PRIORITIES

3.1 | **Acquisition, retention and donor experience –** Attract new donors and reinforce the commitment and retention of donors through an enhanced experience

The launch of the JeDonne app improved the donor experience at blood drives. The app lets the user book appointments independently. The strategy to care for new donors was been initiated, ensuring that a series of actions are taken between the first and fifth donations to increase the return rate of new donors.

3.2 | **Recognition –** Increase the recognition and influence of Héma-Québec and its activities in Québec, Canada and internationally

Héma-Québec continues to enjoy a high rate of recognition among the Québec population. While ensuring the ongoing visibility of blood donation, a new image was developed, and a mass plasma donor recruitment campaign was launched in February 2022. A new campaign aimed at youth was also rolled out to encourage enrolment in the stem cell registry.

3.3 | **Acquisition, retention and volunteer experience –** Attract and retain our pool of volunteers while ensuring the relevance of our volunteer model

While following health measures in effect, volunteers continued to generously support our activities in the permanent centres and at blood drives. They actively contributed to donor recruitment by holding appointment booking booths in schools and at other sites. Furthermore, our youth wing now has more than 100 active members.

3.4 | **Healthcare network –** Consolidate our ties with healthcare network stakeholders, mainly hospitals and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

The new Office of Hospital Client Experience was set up. Efforts were concentrated primarily on the human tissues sector.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Acquisition: Percentage of new blood and plasma donors enrolled	**Under control**	Whole blood: **16.5%** Plasma for fractionation: **9.9%**	Whole blood: 22% Plasma for fractionation: 13%
Recognition: Percentage of spontaneous r ecognition of Héma-Québec	**Under control**	**79%**	80%

4 Scientific expertise, research and innovation

Reinforce and deploy our position as a leading scientific player

PRIORITIES

4.1 | **Positioning –** Strengthen our position in matters of services and reference laboratory expertise with target groups

An analysis of Héma-Québec's website was conducted regarding the services provided by the reference laboratories. A new architecture for the website and its content is being developed to promote the reference laboratories' activities.

4.2 | **Stem cells –** Define and structure Héma-Québec's role in the stem cell and cell therapy sector, and obtain the ministerial mandate for the stem cell registry

Stakeholders have been identified within the organization to take part in the project, which is planned to begin in 2022–2023.

4.3 | **Human tissues –** Develop research collaborations

Preliminary discussions are under way with a potential partner to develop human tissue products not currently offered by Héma-Québec. The aim of this initiative is to maximize the number of products prepared from tissues collected from Québec donors.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Definition of the service offering for cell therapies and stem cells to network partners	**Under control**	**0%**	100%

4 Scientific expertise, research and innovation (cont'd)

Reinforce and deploy our position as a leading scientific player

PRIORITIES

4.4 | New scientific services – Assess and deploy new leading-edge scientific services and a new range of biological products

a) Fetal RhD: The feasibility study was completed. Discussions are under way with the MSSS to find technological solutions for conveying results to hospitals and for the patient healthcare trajectory.

b) Sustainability of the biobank (PlasCov): Samples continue to be collected from plasma donors to supply the PlasCov biobank, whose objective is to serve the scientific community and public health authorities in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategies are being studied to ensure the sustainability of the biobank beyond the donor recruitment and sample collection period.

c) BioArray genotyping platform: Genotyping technology has been automated. Notice of Intent documents and technical specifications were created. The acquisition of equipment is planned for spring 2022.

4.5 | Leading-edge scientific projects – Pursue research, studies and projects with high potential

a) Research into emerging pathogens, epidemiology: Projects are under way in the field in collaboration with public health researchers, placing particular emphasis on evaluating the prevalence of anaplasmosis in donors and the seroprevalence of measles and other infectious agents.

b) Reduction of pathogens (under review) and the serum bank: Preliminary discussions are under way to plan for the evaluation of pathogen-reducing technology that could potentially be applied to part of the inventories of platelets and plasma destined for transfusion.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Deployment of services provided by fetal RhD and the BioArray genotyping platform	**Under control**	**10%**	100%

5 Talent

Build the future with competent, diversified and mobilized teams

PRIORITIES

5.1 | **Employee experience –** Retain, mobilize and enhance the well-being of employees by providing a work environment that offers enriching and rewarding opportunities in which our talent can progress

The structure of the employee experience program has been developed, as well as its governance and deployment plan, with a comprehensive timeframe. A partner from the academic community has been selected to support the initial stages of data collection.

5.2 | **Talent and succession management –** Plan, acquire, develop and mobilize talent with a recognized employer brand

Regarding planning, a quarterly review of labour needs and dashboards were developed, implemented and aligned with the integrated planning cycle. A continuous improvement exercise aimed at all talent acquisition processes was completed. The promotional material and social media strategy to attract candidates were produced. The talent and succession management program has enabled priority identification of key and critical positions, as well as visibility on positions where retirement is upcoming.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Action plans to diagnose the employee experience deployed	**Under control**	**15%**	80%
Action plans implemented and reviewed annually for all critical and key positions	**Under control**	**15%**	95%

5 Talent (cont'd)

Build the future with competent, diversified and mobilized teams

PRIORITIES

5.3 | Skills development – Stimulate employees' learning and professional development of leadership skills and regulatory and professional competencies

The leadership development program was overhauled to include streams for the four levels of management: supervisors, department heads, directors and senior management. Cohorts have begun for each of the levels. As well, a program on "management essentials" is being offered to consolidate the knowledge base on this topic. The plan to enhance the regulatory training program is under way. The model and planning of the standardized professional skills development plan have been developed.

5.4 | Environment, work organization and methods of collaboration – Enhance management culture and practices to provide an inspiring professional environment that fosters a balance between the needs for collaboration, organizational performance and socialization

An integrated hybrid work program was developed and implemented. The program includes a new telework policy, new technology benchmarks favouring the hybrid model, a new organizational life code for employee well-being, and tools for managers and employees in the areas of health and well-being, mobilization, change management, hybrid team management, and communications.

5.5 | Inclusion and diversity – Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment and foster the cultural diversity of profiles and prospects at all levels of the organization

The employment equity program was revised to include new diversity targets. A new harassment prevention policy was also developed.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Participation of managers at all levels in a comprehensive path to a new leadership development program	**Under control**	**15%**	85%
Development and professional training program deployed	**Under control**	**10%**	100%
Implementation of an enhanced introductory regulatory training program for new employees	**Under control**	**25%**	80%

6 Socially responsible enterprise

Consolidate our position as a socially responsible enterprise

PRIORITIES

6.1 | **Governance –** Acquire clear governance (roles and mechanisms) in line with our priorities as a socially responsible enterprise

A strategically positioned governance has been developed and is currently being implemented. It is supported by the Strategic Office of Integrated Communications (SOIC), which has been designated to oversee social responsibility, including sustainable development.

6.2 | **Communication and accountability –** Review our approach to internal communications and accountability

The 2021–2022 annual reporting to the provincial government has been completed. Emphasis will be put on our achievements during 2022–2023.

6.3 | **Aspirations and mobilizing actions –** Showcase our achievements, develop a new five-year plan in line with the *Sustainable Development Act* and deploy actions to achieve tangible results

The Office of Governmental Relations and Social Responsibility was created, as well as the position of director, which will be filled in the coming year. The incumbent will undertake initial steps to produce the Héma-Québec 2023–2028 five-year sustainable development plan and put in place governance mechanisms (including roles, responsibilities, and committees).

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Indicator	Current status	Progress to date	2025 target
Percentage of achievement of the 2023–2028 five-year sustainable development plan	**Under control**	**0%**	40%
Measurement of employee commitment to activities (survey)	**Under control**	**0%**	70%

Governance

Governance

Héma-Québec's activities are governed by a board of directors made up of members representing a balance of experience and expertise aligned with the organization's activities, as well as various stakeholders in the transfusion chain.

To fulfill its role, the board is supported by committees made up of board members and by advisory committees made up of external members. Day-to-day management is delegated to the president and CEO and the executive committee, who collaborate closely to ensure the good governance of the organization and to implement its strategic orientations.

Main areas of interest in 2021–2022:

- 2021–2025 Strategic Plan
- Action plan (update) in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General of Québec (performance audit)
- Crisis management of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Eligibility of men who have sex with men for apheresis plasma donation destined for fractionation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS

12 + 1

members named by the government
–
The board chair is elected from among the members

president and CEO
–
Chosen and named by the members

Composition of the board of directors

Members come from the following categories:

- Blood donors and volunteers
- Recipients
- Presidents and CEOs and chief executives of public institutions (health)
- Physicians
- Public health community
- Scientific research community
- Business community
- Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés du Québec
- Héma-Québec (president and CEO)

Nomination process

Members are nominated by the government (except for the president and CEO) after consultation with the persons or communities in the categories mentioned:

- Applications are sought from persons and communities in these categories.
- Applications are analyzed by the Governance and Ethics Committee based on certain criteria:
  - > source of nominations according to the defined categories listed above;
  - > professional skills profile, in particular finance and accounting, governance and ethics, transfusion medicine (or other relevant specialty), information technology, human resources, public and government relations, legal and judicial affairs, production and operations.
- Applicants are recommended by the Governance and Ethics Committee to the board.
- Applicants' files are submitted to the government, which makes a selection from among the applications submitted.

Mandates of the members

- Four-year term renewable twice, consecutively or not
- Five-year term for the president and CEO

Parity

The composition of the board complies with gender parity:

- 7 women
- 6 men

Breakdown by age group

- 40 to 49: two
- 50 to 59: five
- 60 and over: six
- Average age: 58

Independence and remuneration of members

All board members are independent of Héma-Québec, with the exception of the president and CEO.

Members of the board are not remunerated. They may be compensated for actual loss of salary or income (in accordance with the provisions of a government decree) resulting from their attendance at meetings or other gatherings.

The table below shows the amounts claimed for the period of April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

Members	Amounts claimed in 2021–2022
Jean-Marie Leclerc	$350
Patricia Pelletier	$1,575
Daniel Tremblay	–
Pierre Thivierge	–
Réal Couture	–
Jacques Gédéon	–
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	$3,500
Anne Bourhis	–
Stéphanie Austin	–
Patricia Hudson	–
Caroline Barbir	–
Caroline Banville	–
Total	**$5,425**

Meetings in 2021–2022

Despite the pandemic, the activities of the board and its committees resumed at a regular pace in 2021–2022. All the meetings were held virtually.

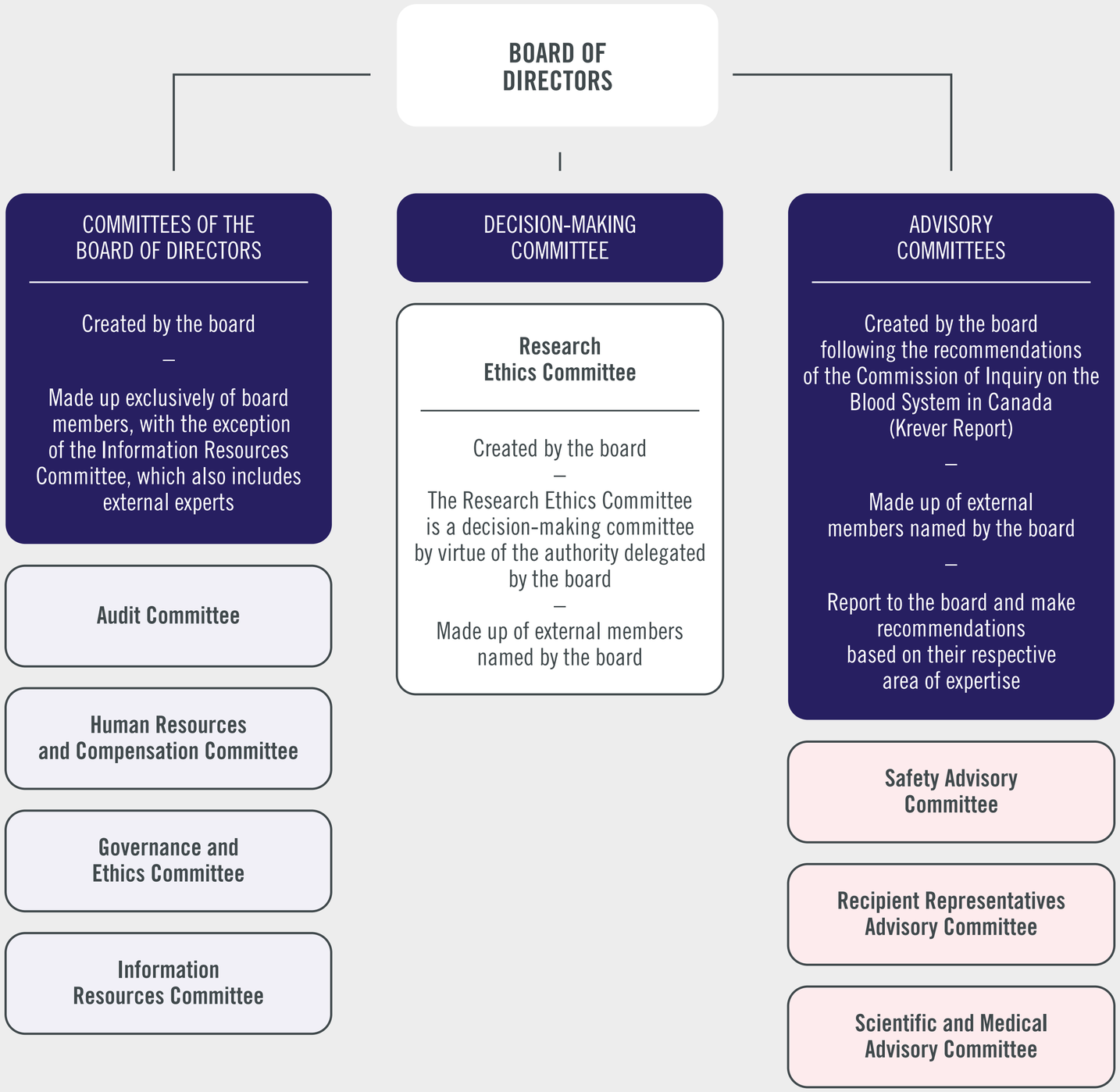
- 9 board meetings: six regular, two extraordinary and one joint meeting with the executive committee (management)
- 23 meetings of the board's committees: 18 regular and five extraordinary
- Attendance rate* at board and committee meetings: 97%

All meetings of the board and its committees include a closed-door discussion period, without the presence of management. However, part of the closed-door period is attended by the president and CEO.

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Anne Bourhis	9	9
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	9	8
Nathalie Fagnan	9	9
Daniel Tremblay	9	9
Patricia Hudson	9	8
Caroline Barbir	9	9
Jacques Gédéon	9	9
Jean-Marie Leclerc	9	9
Patricia Pelletier	9	9
Stéphanie Austin	9	9
Caroline Banville	9	9
Pierre Thivierge	9	9
Réal Couture	9	9

* Section 3.18 of the general regulations provides that directors may dismiss a director who, during a period of 12 consecutive months, is absent from more than three meetings.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ITS COMMITTEES



Members of the Board of Directors

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Anne Bourhis
Chair
Full Professor
Human Resources Management Department
HEC Montréal

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty
Vice Chair
General Manager
TACT Conseils

HÉMA-QUÉBEC

Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A
Secretary
President and Chief Executive Officer
Héma-Québec

PUBLIC HEALTH

Dr. Patricia Hudson
Scientific Director
Direction des risques biologiques
Institut national de santé publique du Québec

PRESIDENTS AND CEOS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS*

Caroline Barbir
President and General Manager
Centre hospitalier universitaire
Sainte-Justine

COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS DU QUÉBEC

Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc
Hematologist-Oncologist
Centre hospitalier universitaire
Sainte-Justine

Dr. Patricia Pelletier, MD, FRCPC
Director of the Transfusion
Medicine Department
McGill University Health Centre

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Stéphanie Austin
Full Professor
Département de gestion des ressources humaines
École de gestion, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

RECIPIENTS

Daniel Tremblay
Member
Fondation de la greffe de moelle
osseuse de l'Est du Québec

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Jacques Gédéon
President
Association des bénévoles du don de
sang, Outaouais chapter

ORDRE DES COMPTABLES PROFESSIONNELS AGRÉÉS DU QUÉBEC

Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC
Corporate Director

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Caroline Banville
Partner
Consulting and Deals
PricewaterhouseCoopers

Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A
President, Octium Solutions Inc
Chief Financial Officer,
Quadra Chimie

* Within the meaning of the *Act respecting health services and social services*.

Board of Directors – Member biographies

Anne Bouhris

Chair

Anne Bourhis holds a PhD in Organizational Behaviour from the University of Illinois and a Master of Science in Human Resources Management from HEC Montréal. She has worked in the field since 1999. She is currently a full professor in the Department of Human Resources Management and education director of the University Competitions Service. Previously, she served as department head (2006–2012) and director of the Master of Management Sciences program (2013–2016).

Her area of specialty focuses primarily on new staff recruitment and selection practices. An invited speaker at various professional and scientific symposia, she is a member of several scientific associations.

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty

Vice Chair

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine has a Bachelor of Science in Neurobiology from McGill University, as well as a Bachelor and a Master of Laws from the Université de Sherbrooke. He is also certified as a corporate director by the Institute of Corporate Directors.

He is a current or past member of several boards of directors, including the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec, BioQuébec, the Regroupement en soins de santé personnalisé au Québec (RSSPQ) and the NEOMED Institute. He was involved in creating and expanding the NEOMED Institute and, more recently, in aligning Montréal's artificial intelligence sector with the pharmaceutical industry.

Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A

Secretary

Nathalie Fagnan holds a Bachelor's in Business Administration from HEC, is a member of the Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés and is certified as a corporate director by the Institute of Corporate Directors. She has held several executive-level positions within internationally renowned companies.

She was executive vice president and chief operating officer at Publicis North America. She also served as executive vice president and chief operating officer at the firm Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton (RCGT), and executive vice president and chief financial officer at Publicis Canada. She has been president and CEO of Héma-Québec since 2019.

Dr. Patricia Hudson

Member

Dr. Hudson holds a degree in medicine from the Université de Montréal (1985) and obtained her Master's in Public Health from Columbia University in 1998. In 1999, she focused on public health and completed her residency in community medicine at McGill University in 2004. In 2005, she assumed the position of coordinator of infectious diseases at the Direction de santé publique de Laval. From 2007 to 2016, she held similar positions at the Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie. Since 2016, she has been the scientific director of the Bio-Risk Department at the INSPQ.

Caroline Barbir

Member

Caroline Barbir is an experienced administrator and has been a member of the Ordre des administrateurs agréés du Québec since 1998. She holds a Bachelor of Biology in Human Genetics (1979) and a Master's in Health Administration (1982). In 1984, she served as director of hospital, technical and placement services at the Montreal Chest Institute. From 1989 to 2015, she successively held the position of chief executive officer at six different health establishments. From 2015 to 2018, she was president and CEO of the CISSS de Laval. Since 2018, she has held the position of president and CEO of the CHU Sainte-Justine.

Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc

Member

A pediatric hematologist-oncologist, Dr. Leclerc recently retired after 35 years with the CHU Sainte-Justine, where he helped establish clinical research programs for various pediatric diseases.

From 1996 to 2012, he reduced his clinical activities at the CHU Sainte-Justine to concentrate on developing new drugs for the Canadian pharmaceutical industry. Upon his return full-time to the CHU Sainte-Justine, he put this experience to work for the benefit of patients. Since January 2022, he has also acted as consultant on various pharmaceutical and medical projects.

Dr. Patricia Pelletier, MD, FRCPC

Member

After graduating in medicine from McGill University (1998), Dr. Pelletier chose to specialize in hematology to perfect her knowledge of cellular therapy research before pursuing her studies at the New York Blood Center, with a fellowship in transfusion medicine and additional training in immunogenetics and histocompatibility.

She has been working at the McGill University Health Centre as a hematologist and director of transfusion medicine since 2007. She also holds the position of RUIS expert in transfusion medicine for McGill University.

Stéphanie Austin

Member

Stéphanie Austin holds a PhD in Psychology and a Master's in Epidemiology from Université Laval. She has held the position of professor in the Department of Human Resources Management at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières since 2010 and became tenured in 2016. She manages the Groupe de recherche Motivation Mieux-Être. To date, she has published 50 scientific articles and book chapters on the health of individuals and organizations.

She also acts as a resource person for governance (École de gestion of the UQTR, board of directors of the Séminaire Saint-Joseph) and research, including as a reviewer at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Daniel Tremblay

Member

Daniel Tremblay holds bachelor's degrees in IT Management and Bio-Ergonomics and has developed expertise in new technologies. He contributed to the computerization of several government agencies and departments. From 2013 to 2016, he headed the Direction des infrastructures et du soutien aux utilisateurs of the Commission administrative des régimes de retraites et d'assurances. He was also a member of the Biovigilance Committee from 2003 to 2019 and served as its chair from 2005 to 2017.

For several years now, he has been increasingly involved with the Fondation de la greffe de moelle osseuse de l'Est du Québec.

Jacques Gédéon

Member

Jacques Gédéon is very involved in the field of communications. He spent 18 years at Société Radio-Canada in a variety of positions, including reporter and assistant manager of French-language television programming in the National Capital Region. From 1991 to his retirement in 2007, he managed the National Capital Commission's radio and television section.

Since then, he has devoted his time to the Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) as president of the Outaouais chapter. He also shares his vast experience in support of several community activities in his region.

Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC

Member

Réal Couture is a Fellow of the Ordre des comptables professionnels agréés du Québec (FCPA, FCA) and carries the designation of Administrateur de sociétés certifié (ASC). He held the position of vice president, finance and administration, at Sépaq from 1990 to 2010, and at the Montréal Port Authority from 2010 to 2019. He has been a speaker, notably at the Association des MBA du Québec and HEC Montréal, and a facilitator of training sessions at the Ordre des CPA.

He is also a member of the professional orders' ethics and professional conduct inquiry committees and a member of the elections oversight committee of the Ordre des CPA.

Caroline Banville

Member

A graduate of École Polytechnique de Montréal (1993), Caroline Banville began her career as a senior engineer at Teleglobe Canada. She went on to work in the United States at Teleglobe USA and Startec Global Communications, subsequently holding various positions as assistant IT director (Nextel Communications) and IT director at Sprint Nextel and YRCW Technologies.

Upon her return to Canada in 2007, she assumed the position of vice president in the consulting services department of CGI. After nine years with this business consulting company, she became the National Consulting Leader for the Technology, Media and Telecommunications practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A

Member

Pierre Thivierge holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and an accreditation from the Rotman-ICD Directors Education program. He has more than 30 years of experience in the financial field. From 1986 to 1997, he held the positions of auditor and comptroller. He subsequently became president of finance at Schering-Plough and Baker Cummins, and then management consultant at Atkinson & Associates until 2004.

Pierre Thivierge is chief financial officer at Quadra Chemicals and of Solutions Octium.

INFORMATION OF PUBLIC INTEREST ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Members	Date of nomination	End of mandate	Place of residence	Age	Seniority	Membership in boards of directors of other associations
Anne Bourhis	September 13, 2017	September 13, 2021*	Montréal	54	5 years and 7 months	Investissement Québec
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty	March 23, 2016	March 23, 2020*	Boucherville	53	6 years	BIOQuébec, Q-CROC, Arion Orchestre Baroque, Montréal InVivo
Nathalie Fagnan	January 30, 2019	January 29, 2022**	Montréal	56	3 years and 3 months	La Presse, Groupe La Veillée (Théâtre Prospero), Fondation Héma-Québec
Daniel Tremblay	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Québec City	64	2 years and 3 months	None
Dr. Patricia Hudson	December 13, 2017	December 13, 2021*	Montréal	60	5 years and 4 months	None
Caroline Barbir	October 19, 2016	October 19, 2020*	Montréal	64	6 years and 6 months	Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine
Jacques Gédéon	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Gatineau	72	2 years and 3 months	Association des bénévoles du don de sang (ABDS) – Outaouais chapter, Fondation Culture Outaouais, Mixmédiarts
Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc	February 26, 2014 (renewed: January 29, 2020)	January 29, 2024	Laval	68	8 years and 2 months	Association des médecins hématologues et oncologues du Québec (AMHOQ), Q-CROC
Dr.Patricia Pelletier	September 13, 2017	September 13, 2021*	Montréal	47	5 years and 7 months	None
Stéphanie Austin	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Trois-Rivières	44	2 years and 3 months	Conseil de régie de l'École de gestion de l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Conseil d'établissement de l'École de Pointe-du-Lac, Conseil d'administration du Séminaire Saint-Joseph, Trois-Rivières
Caroline Banville	December 13, 2017	December 13, 2021*	Montréal	51	5 years and 4 months	None
Pierre Thivierge	March 23, 2016	March 23, 2020*	Montréal	58	6 years	Gestion Infilise, Hydro Technologies (Canada)
Réal Couture	January 29, 2020	January 29, 2024	Québec City	62	2 years and 3 months	None

* Upon expiry of their mandate, members remain on the board until they are either replaced or nominated again.
** The president and chief executive officer is chosen and nominated by the board members.

BOARD COMMITTEES

The board of directors and its committees assume the statutory responsibilities described in the general regulations. These bodies deal with projects specific to each fiscal year. The list of names appears on this page.

GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty, Chair

Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC

Dr. Patricia Hudson

All committee members are independent.

Main areas of interest:

- Makeup of the board of directors and its committees (including the mandates of the directors)
- First phase of the governance review – evaluation of the functioning of the board of directors and its committees
- Follow-up on the modernization of the *Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises* (AGSE)
- Review of the annual report

Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	**3**	**3**
Patricia Hudson	3	3
Réal Couture	3	3

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Réal Couture, FCPA, ASC, Chair

Pierre Thivierge, CPA, IAS.A

Dr. Jean-Marie Leclerc

Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine Atty

All committee members are independent.

Main areas of interest:

- Accountability for the action plan in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General of Québec (performance audit)
- Procedures regarding liability thresholds under the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*
- Follow-up of the government approval of 2021–2022 budget
- Integrated risk management
- Internal auditing program and follow-up of Health Canada observations
- Status report on blood product inventories
- Insurance coverage and policy renewal strategy

Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Réal Couture	**9**	**9**
Pierre Thivierge	9	9
Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine	9	7
Jean-Marie Leclerc	9	8

HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

Anne Bourhis, Chair

Stéphanie Austin

Caroline Barbir

All committee members are independent.

Main areas of interest:

- Follow-up of mandate requests submitted to the Conseil du trésor (wage structure and grades)
- Status of collective agreement negotiations
- Policy on the prevention of workplace harassment
- Executive Leadership Program
- Talent management
- Recruitment process for the position of Vice President, Information Technology and Digital Strategy

Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Anne Bourhis	**5**	**5**
Caroline Barbir	5	5
Stéphanie Austin	5	5

INFORMATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DIRECTOR MEMBERS	**Caroline Banville,** Chair
	Daniel Tremblay
EXTERNAL MEMBERS	**Michèle Bureau** Consultant, Information Technology and Electronic Affairs Bureau et Associés
	Robert Charbonneau Information Technology Consultant

All committee members are independent.

Main areas of interest:

- 2021–2022 information technology (IT) objectives
- Information system on the traceability of blood products (SIIATH)
- Strategy and roadmap for the integrated management software package (PGI)
- Operational planning and staff management project (POA)
- Security management and follow-up of cybersecurity incidents
- Upgrading of eProgesa
- Status report of IT assets and software

Individual attendance of directors at committee meetings:

Directors	Number of meetings	Attendance
Caroline Banville	**4**	**4**
Daniel Tremblay	4	4

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
COCQ-SIDA	**Michel Morin,** *Chair*
ASSOCIATION DES PATIENTS IMMUNODÉFICIENTS DU QUÉBEC	**Geneviève Solomon,** *Interim Chair and Vice-Chair*
	Martine Allard
ASSOCIATION D'ANÉMIE FALCIFORME DU QUÉBEC	**Marlin Akplogan**
	Wilson Sanon
LEUCAN	**Pierre Verret**
LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY OF CANADA	**Pascale Rousseau**
	Qi Li
BOARD OBSERVER	**Daniel Tremblay**

All committee members are independent.

SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE	**David Page,** *Chair* National Director of Health Policy, Canadian Hemophilia Society, Montréal, Canada
INFECTIOUS DISEASES	**Dr. Susan Stramer** Vice President of Scientific Affairs Biomedical Services, American Red Cross, Gaithersburg, Maryland, United States
	Dr. Hans L. Zaaijer Professor, Blood-borne Infections, Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation, University Medical Centers, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
	Dr. Louis M. Katz Chief Medical Officer Emeritus, ImpactLife Blood Services, Davenport, Iowa, United States Adjunct Clinical Professor of Infectious Diseases and Medicine, Roy and Lucille Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa City, Iowa, United States
	Dr. Jutta Preiksaitis Professor Emeritus, Division of Infectious Diseases, Faculty of Medicine, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
EPIDEMIOLOGY	**Dr. Steven Kleinman** Biomedical Consultant, Victoria, Canada Clinical Professor, Department of Pathology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
TRANSFUSION MEDICINE AND PRACTICES	**Dr. Luiz Amorim** President and Chief Executive Officer, Hemorio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
	Dr. Rebecca Cardigan National Head of Component Development, NHS Blood and Transplant, Cambridge, United Kingdom
	Dr. Reinhard Henschler Directeur, Institute of Transfusion Medicine, University Hospital Leipzig AöR, Leipzig, Germany
	Dr. Pierre Tiberghien Professor of Medicine, Immunology, Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France Senior Advisor for Medical and Scientific Affairs, Europe and International, Établissement français du sang, La Plaine Saint Denis (Paris), France President, European Blood Alliance (EBA)
CANADIAN BLOOD SERVICES	**Dr. Steven Drews** Associate Director, Microbiology, Canadian Blood Services Associate Professor, Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
BOARD OBSERVER	**Dr. Patricia Pelletier** Director of Transfusion Medicine, McGill University Health Centre, Montréal, Canada

All committee members are independent.

SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
IMMUNOLOGY	**Yves St-Pierre,** *Chair* Full Professor, Centre Armand-Frappier Santé Biotechnologie, Institut national de la recherche scientifique, Laval, Canada
IMMUNOHEMATOLOGY, GENOTYPING	**Greg Denomme** Laboratory Director and Head of Research and Development, Grifols Laboratory Solutions Inc., San Marcos, Texas, United States
EPIDEMIOLOGY OF TRANSFUSION	**Dean Fergusson** Director and Senior Scientist, Clinical Epidemiology Program Full Professor, Departments of Medicine and Surgery, and School of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Ottawa Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Ottawa, Canada
TRANSFUSION, CELLULAR THERAPIES, IMMUNOLOGY	**Magali Fontaine** Professor of Pathology and Medicine, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, United States
HUMAN TISSUES	**Marisa Herson** Chair, Eye and Tissue Advisory Committee, Australian Organ and Tissue Authority, Canberra, Australia Honorary Associate Professor, Faculty of Health, Department of Ethics, Law and Professionalism, School of Medicine, Deakin University, Australia
TRANSFUSION MEDICINE	**Richard Kaufman** Medical Director, Adult Transfusion Service, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, United States Assistant Professor of Pathology, Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States
	Vincent Laroche Hematologist and co-director of the blood bank Director of the therapeutic apheresis and stem cell collection unit, CHU de Québec-Université Laval Medical expert in transfusion medicine, Réseau universitaire intégré de santé (RUIS) de l'Université Laval, CHU de Québec-Université Laval Québec City, Canada
	Pieter van der Meer Senior Scientist, Department of Product and Process Development, Sanquin Blood Bank, Amsterdam, The Netherlands Research Coordinator, Hematology Department, Haga Teaching Hospital, The Hague, The Netherlands
BIOLOGY, IMMUNOLOGY, (MOLECULAR) HEMATOLOGY	**Tarik Möröy** Director, Hematopoiesis & Cancer Research Unit, and Full Research Professor, Montréal Clinical Research Institute, Montréal, Canada
TRANSFUSION, PRENATAL TRANSFUSION MEDICINE	**Chantale Pambrun** Senior Medical Director, Innovation and Portfolio Management, Canadian Blood Services Adjunct Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada
CELLULAR THERAPIES, HEMATOLOGY	**Donna Wall** Professor, Pediatrics and Immunology, University of Toronto Section Head, Blood and Marrow Transplant/Cellular Therapy, Division of Hematology/Oncology, The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada

All committee members are independent.

DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Fields represented	Members
SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH	**Clermont Dionne,** *Chair* Full Professor and Director, Department of Social and Preventative Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec – Université Laval, population health and optimal health practices research axis, Québec City, Canada Centre d'excellence sur le vieillissement de Québec (CEVQ), Centre de recherche en santé durable VITAM, Québec City, Canada
	Patrick J. Rochette Full Professor, Department of Ophthalmology and ENT, Head and Neck Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec, Université Laval, regenerative medicine research axis, Québec City, Canada
	Jacques J. Tremblay Full professor, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproduction, Faculty of Medicine, Université Laval Researcher, Centre de recherche du CHU de Québec – Université Laval, reproduction, mother and child health research axis, Québec City, Canada
LAW	**Geneviève Cardinal Atty,** *Vice Chair* Head, Bureau de l'éthique de la recherche, Chair of the Research Ethics Committee, Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine, Montréal, Canada
LAW, SUBSTITUTE LAWYER	**Alexandra Sweeney-Beaudry** Attorney, Health Law, Borden Ladner Gervais (BLG) Lecturer in the Master's in Health Law and Policy program, Law Faculty, Université de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Canada
BLOOD DONORS	**Pierre Galarneau** Donor and volunteer, Association des bénévoles du don de sang, Montréal, Canada
RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE, ETHICIST	**Michel Morin** Assistant Director, COCQ-SIDA, Montréal, Canada
RECIPIENT REPRESENTATIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (substitute member)	**Pierre Verret** Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Nursing Sciences, Université Laval, Québec City, Canada Associate member of Leucan
SUBSTITUTE ETHICIST	**Johane de Champlain Atty** Vice-Chair and Ethics Advisor, Comité central d'éthique de la recherche (MSSS), Montréal, Canada

All committee members are independent.

Executive Committee

Nathalie Fagnan, CPA, IAS.A
President and Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Marc Germain, MD, PhD, FRCPC
Vice President, Medical Affairs and Innovation

Sébastien Gignac Atty
BA (Hons), MA, BCL, LL.B.
Vice President, General Secretariat, Risks and Auditing

Annie Gingras , BSc, MBA
Vice President, Quality and Development

Patrick Hardy, MSc, MBA
Vice President, Information Technology and Digital Strategy

Geneviève LeBrun , MSc
Vice President, Client Experience and Business Intelligence

Luc Lévesque
Vice President, Blood Products and Mother's Milk

Christine Ouimet
Vice President, Supply Chain

Dr. Nancy Robitaille , MD, FRCPC
Vice President, Transfusion Medicine

Luc Vermeersch , CPA
Vice President, Finance and Infrastructure

Roselyne Zombecki, CRIA
Vice President, People, Culture and Leadership

The composition of the committee complies with gender parity: six women, five men.

Remuneration of senior executives

Total remuneration of the 11 Héma-Québec senior executives was $2,578,598.

No bonus was paid to members of senior management, although they are subject to annual review based on performance criteria.

Legislative requirements

Legislative requirements

Compliance with legislation

Héma-Québec is accountable under the following laws, regulations and policies:

- *The Sustainable Development Act*
- *Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif*
- *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*
- *Politique gouvernementale relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'Administration*
- *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*
- *Politique de financement des services publics*
- *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*
- *Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises*
- *Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises*

Sustainable Development Act

Héma-Québec's action plan is set out in the framework of the 2015–2020 Government Sustainable Development Strategy and is structured around the following directions and objectives:

Government direction 1 – Strengthen governance for sustainable development in the public administration

- **Objective 1.1** – Strengthen the use of ecoresponsible management practices in the public administration
- **Objective 1.2** – Strengthen the use of the principles of sustainable development by government departments and public bodies
- **Objective 1.5** – Strengthen access to and participation in cultural life as a lever for social, economic and land development

Government direction 2 – Develop a sustainable and prosperous economy that is green and responsible

- **Objective 2.1** – Support the development of green and responsible business practices and models

Government direction 5 – Improve population health through prevention

- **Objective 5.2** – Act to ensure that living environments are healthy and safe

Government direction 6 – Ensure sustainable land-use planning and support community vitality

- **Objective 6.2** – Strengthen community capabilities to support dynamic economic and social land development

Some objectives of the government strategy have not been included in the sustainable development plan since they did not apply to Héma-Québec's organizational reality. They are prioritized in order to optimize actions that can contribute to achieving the government's objectives. The table on the following pages outlines the plan's actions and achievements. Because of the pandemic of this past year, the objectives were not all met.

RESULTS RELATIVE TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

	Action	Indicators	Targets	Results and summary of the activities carried out during the year	Achievement of target
1	Optimize transportation	• Number of km/vehicles • Number of deliveries	• In connection with the opening of new donor centres, optimize routes and deliveries to minimize transportation	• Provincial map of delivery routes developed and implemented to provide a comprehensive picture of efficacy and possibilities • Telemetry technology project to extract data by suggesting best scenarios and reducing costs and mileage launched (under way)	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date
2	Put in place an app to promote carpooling for travel between facilities	• Number of users • Number of carpoolers registered	• Between now and 2020	• As the result of the pandemic and distancing measures put in place, this activity was not achieved in 2021–2022	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
3	Continue the distribution of trees, and develop a herbs/urban architecture element, coupled with a recipe component	• Number of participating sites • Number of participating employees	• Annual event, ongoing for the duration of the plan	• No activity in 2021-2022	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
4	Maintain and continue training and development initiatives and tools for meeting and sharing remotely (for example, WebEx, C@MPUS, Jabber)	• Number of training sessions • Number of participants	• Ongoing	• Complete migration to Microsoft Exchange Online (Office 365) • Schedules integrated with Microsoft Teams • Collaborative material launched for use by Teams in the laboratories • New remote desktop platform released	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date
5	Maintain the objective of adding contractual clauses incorporating sustainable development and ecoresponsible principles into calls for tenders and contracts	• Number of calls for tenders and contracts affected	• Ongoing	• No change from the previous reporting period • New policy review period and drafting of contractual clauses in compliance with Bill 12	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
6	Promote the use of hybrid and electric vehicles	• Rate of use of electric vehicles	• Vehicles: integrate the courtesy vehicle fleet • Add charging stations – fall 2016 • Analyze the feasibility of completion for the next sites	• Two hybrid vehicles acquired in 2021–2022 • 180 parking stickers issued (Québec City) • Budget planning (2023–2024 capital assets) completed for the future purchase of two 28-ft cables carrying electrical current.	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date
7	Minimize product expiry	• Internal expiry rate (target by product set annually) • Follow-up and awareness raising among hospital clients	• Ongoing	• Packed red blood cells: 0.08% in 2021–2022 compared with 1.05% in 2020–2021 (-0.97%) • Platelets: 2.5% in 2021–2022 compared with 2.6% in 2020–2021 (-0.1%)	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date
8	Reduce the use of paper (current and future initiatives, schedules, pay, Smart Suite, internal forms, fiscal statements, Web and Wi-Fi access)	• Amount of paper for recycling/trash	• Ongoing	• Amount of material recycled at the Montréal facility: > Cardboard: 22,833 kg per year > Paper: 4,474 kg per year	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date

RESULTS RELATIVE TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

	Action	Indicators	Targets	Results and summary of the activities carried out during the year	Achievement of target
9	Continue programs to encourage public transit and carpooling	• Number of participants	• Ongoing	• 93 persons subscribed to public transit incentive programs	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
10	Continue photography courses (introduction and addition of composition and editing), review the exhibition concept (semi-permanent event)	• Number of participants • Report for each of the events	• Annual activity for the duration of the 2015–2020 action plan	• No activity in 2021-2022	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
11	Opening of donor centres with an emphasis on creating local jobs and showcasing regional outreach	• Number of jobs created • Number of local suppliers	• Québec City in fall 2016 and Montréal in spring 2017 • Other sites and schedules to be established	• Maintained established partnerships with local suppliers • Montréal centre opened on April 6, 2021	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date
12	Maintain the annual influenza vaccination program for staff on a voluntary basis	• Number of employees vaccinated	• Annual campaign	• 21 employees took advantage of the offer to reimburse the cost of the flu vaccine. (Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign could not be held in Héma-Québec's facilities. In its place, reimbursement was offered.)	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
13	Update the program for reimbursement of expenses related to physical activity and sporting events to expand and continue to promote a more active lifestyle and better health for employees of the organization	• Number of employees participating	• Ongoing	• 114 employees partially reimbursed for physical activity expenses • 3 employees reimbursed for participation in sporting events (reason: COVID-19 pandemic)	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
14	Continue training on the *Sustainable Development Act* principles (internally and with some partners). Implement specific training plans integrating the concept of sustainable development within daily activities	• Follow-up on the number of training sessions and presentations	• Ongoing	• No activity in 2021-2022	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
15	Include volunteers in the plasma donation recruitment program	• Number of participants	• Ongoing	• 50 volunteers helped recruit plasma donors (reason: COVID-19 pandemic)	• NOT ACHIEVED – Started
16	Maintain the commitment of mobile blood drive organizing committees to serve the Héma-Québec mission	• Number of blood drives organized with their collaboration	• Ongoing	• 1,424 blood drives organized in partnership with organizing committees	• ACHIEVED – Before or on the planned date

Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif

Héma-Québec directors are held to high ethical and professional standards, thereby fostering public trust and transparency in the management of Québec's biovigilance system.

Under the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*, Héma-Québec directors adopted a directors' code of ethics. It is reviewed annually by the Governance and Ethics Committee, and the directors sign a form every year attesting that they undertake to comply with it.

The directors' declarations of interests are verified at the beginning of every board or committee meeting and included in the minutes. Furthermore, no case has ever been brought forward under the directors' code of ethics, and no breach of conduct was reported in 2021–2022. Héma-Québec's directors' code of ethics can be consulted on page 70.

Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies

Public trust in Héma-Québec stems not only from its ability to distribute safe, high-quality biological products of human origin, but also from every action taken and decision made. The organization's integrity is founded on sound financial management and the implementation of organizational values (integrity and honesty, respect, empowerment, and engagement).

To earn this trust and to comply with the *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*, Héma-Québec maintains a policy governing the disclosure of wrongdoings. The aim of this policy is to encourage and facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to Héma-Québec that have been or are about to be committed, while protecting whistleblowers from reprisals.

During the year, no disclosure was made, nor information communicated to the person responsible for following up disclosures.

Politique gouvernementale relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'Administration

In accordance with the *Politique gouvernementale relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'Administration* (policy on the use and quality of French within the government), the standing committee chaired by the representative of the *Charter of the French Language* ensures that the language policy is implemented within the organization

Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information

Pursuant to Division III of the *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*, Héma-Québec attests to having published the required documents and information on its website.

Access to information

In 2021–2022, nine requests for access to documents held by Héma-Québec, nine requests for access to personal information, and no request for corrections to personal information were received and processed within the timelines prescribed by the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information*.

PROCESSING OF ACCESS REQUESTS

Nature of the request	Processing time		Decision rendered	
Administrative documents	0–20 days	2	Accepted	7
	21–30 days	6	Partially accepted	1[1]
	31 days or more	1	Refused	1[1]
	Total	**9**	**Total**	**9**
Personal information	0–20 days	6	Accepted	8
	21–30 days	3	Partially accepted	1[1]
	31 days or more	0	Refused	0
	Total	**9**	**Total**	**9**
Corrections	0–20 days	0	Accepted	0
	21–30 days	0	Partially accepted	0
	31 days or more	0	Refused	0
	Total	**0**	**Total**	**0**

Total number of access requests subjected to reasonable accommodation measures	0
Number of review notices received from the *Commission d'accès à l'information*	0

[1] Provisions of the act justifying the decisions rendered: 14, 21, 22, 27, 35, 37, 53, 54, 57, 59, 88.1, 94.

Information Security Committee

The Information Security Committee (ISC) provides support for information security management and coordination activities, specifically by monitoring the measures put in place to ensure the integrity, security and confidentiality of the information collected and held by Héma-Québec. In accordance with the *Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information*, the individuals in charge of information security and access to information and personal information sit on the committee.

The ISC continued developing its policies in keeping with the implementation of its action plan and follow-up of the recommendations. In regard to risk management, measures were taken to strengthen cybersecurity. More specifically, Héma-Québec placed emphasis on raising employee awareness by establishing an information security awareness committee. This committee oversaw the roll-out of specific information security campaigns and training, as well as the communication of feedback from regular phishing tests.

Policy for the funding of public services

This section highlights information pertaining to Héma-Québec's fees to which the *Policy for the funding of public services applies*. Billing to parties other than Québec hospitals represents approximately 0.65% of the organization's total budget.

As a non-profit organization, Héma-Québec targets a funding level of 100%. This showed a slight deficit for billing, other than billing to hospitals. The difference of 16%, or $542,000, is not significant relative to Héma-Québec's total billing of $443 M.

Héma-Québec's fees are reviewed on April 1 of each year and indexed based on budgeted costs and volumes. Fees are set for each sector.

Labile products

Héma-Québec uses an activity-based accounting model to determine production and distribution costs, which are used to set fees (total cost) for each labile product. These costs are presented to the CAG (Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales), the agency designated by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux to manage pooled procurement, and approved by the CAG.

Stable products

Héma-Québec uses full cost plus pricing to set the fees for stable products charged to a third party other than Québec hospitals to cushion itself against a potential increase in costs.

Héma-Québec acts as the distributor of these products. It purchases the products through calls for tenders and manages the reserve. Several suppliers are located in the United States; as such, Héma-Québec's purchases are subject to fluctuations in the exchange rates.

Innovative products (human tissues and stem cells)

For other activity sectors, the fees are mainly determined on a market-oriented basis since Héma-Québec does not have exclusive rights to distribute these products in Québec.

Billing other than to Québec hospitals (in thousands of dollars)	Revenues	Costs	Funding level achieved
Labile and stable product sectors	1,400	2,000	70%
Innovative product sectors (human tissues and stem cells)	1,500	1,442	104%
Total	**2,900**	**3,442**	**84%**

Act respecting contracting by public bodies

In an effort to strengthen the transparency of the contract management process and to inform the public about the measures being applied to ensure this, the organization reports annually to its board of directors on the application of its *Contract Management Policy*, as well as to the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT).

A series of measures dealing with the application of rules of ethics and conduct in the management of contracts by employees, the handling of complaints, and accountability are based on principles of accessibility, integrity, transparency and imputability that form the underpinnings of the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*. This Act reinforces the imputability of senior executives of public bodies and fosters the sound management of public funds.

For the reference period, 84 authorization records were submitted to the SCT. Expenditures made on public markets subject to the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies* represented $221M, for a total of 122 contracts of more than $25,000.

Because of the pandemic, Héma-Québec had to make some changes and adjustments, in addition to reviewing its way of doing business in regard to purchasing strategies and planning. For the reference period, the organization entered into four critical contracts to secure the purchase of stable products valued at $205M.

Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises

The *Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and stateowned enterprises* was adopted by the National Assembly in December 2014 to strengthen the mechanisms for managing and controlling the workforce of public bodies. Héma-Québec confirms that it has complied with the provisions of the Act that apply to it. In accordance with the prescribed terms and conditions, the organization communicated the required information about service contracts authorized by the president and CEO to the Conseil du trésor.

The organization also periodically informed the Minister of Health and Social Services about its staffing level, providing a breakdown by job category, in accordance with the terms and conditions determined by the Conseil du trésor.

The target set for Héma-Québec for 2021–2022 represented an 4.9% increase in paid hours compared with 2020–2021. This increase is necessary for the evolution and upgrading of Héma-Québec.

For the 2021–2022 fiscal year, we are reporting a volume of hours below the target of 44,940 hours. The decline in volume caused by increased restrictions and a labour shortage, combined with a slowdown in operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic, generated a decrease in paid hours.

STAFF BREAKDOWN BY PAID HOURS
FOR THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1, 2021, TO MARCH 31, 2022

Category	Hours worked	Overtime hours	Total paid hours	Full-time equivalent	Number of employees at March 31
Managerial staff	375,909	281	376,190	207	222
Professional staff	562,582	4,024	566,606	311	336
Nursing staff	310,533	10,369	320,902	176	195
Office staff, technicians and related staff	1,138,650	42,862	1,181,512	649	723
Labourers, maintenance and service staff	115,051	13,100	128,151	71	60
Students and interns	5,826	0	5,826	3	15
TOTAL 2021–2022	**2,508,551**	**70,636**	**2,579,187**	**1,417**	**1,551**
TOTAL 2020–2021			**2,514,042**	**1,381**	**1,412**

Act respecting the governance and management of the information resources of public bodies and government enterprises

In compliance with the requirements of the GMIR, Héma-Québec began substantially upgrading many critical elements of its infrastructure, including upgrading its blood management software package and the computer system in its blood product qualification laboratory, enhancing the technology in its call centres and replacing equipment in its blood drives. This work will continue in 2022–2023.

Substantial upgrading of the main computer platforms also reached a major milestone with the launch of the upgrade to the organization's integrated management software package. During the 2021–2022 fiscal year, Héma-Québec pursued its shift to cloud computing with most systems being rolled out or upgraded using this new technology.

Héma-Québec's new strategic plan, released in February 2022, consists of many areas of intervention that will require implementing effective and secure digital solutions to achieve the organization's strategic objectives, namely:

- upgrading the foundations;
- donor and partner experience;
- plasma self-sufficiency; and
- product procurement security.

Security of operations and IT assets

Héma-Québec has begun implementing its six-step strategy aimed at reinforcing the management of information security:

1. Annual review of the governance and risk management plan regarding cybersecurity and adaptation to new operational threats and realities;
2. Increased robustness of current assets, ensuring constant updating and eliminating obsolete systems;
3. Reinforcing controls and monitoring assets and the extended network perimeter;
4. Integration and regular review of identity and access controls;
5. Operation of response and backup plans. Sharing information and collaboration with various government and private sector partners;
6. Awareness raising among users aimed at developing their reflexes to better detect threats and avoid falling into hacking traps.

The cybersecurity team continues to evolve with the addition of internal resources and external partners. A modern security architecture for technology assets has been documented and will gradually be put in place as Héma-Québec's strategic plan is implemented. Despite the constant increase in malicious activities targeting Canadian organizations in 2021–2022, Héma-Québec is not reporting any event leading to a cyber incident.

Directors' Code of Ethics

Preamble

Héma-Québec's mission is to efficiently provide adequate quantities of safe, optimal blood components and substitutes, human tissues and cord blood to meet the needs of all Québecers as well as to provide and develop expertise along with specialized and innovative services and products in the fields of transfusion medicine and human tissue transplantation. This mandate is pursuant to the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee* and to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into the Blood System in Canada, headed by the Honourable Horace Krever.

Héma-Québec's directors, who are public administrators in accordance with the *Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q. M-30), are held to the highest ethical and professional standards, thereby fostering and preserving public trust and transparency in its mission.

Code of Ethics

1. General provisions

Definitions

In this code of ethics, unless the context dictates otherwise, the terms and expressions below are used as follows:

1.1 "Director or member of the Board of Directors": Person appointed to the Héma-Québec Board of Directors by the government, as well as the President and Chief Executive Officer, who is an ex officio member of the Board of Directors and acts as Secretary;

1.2 "Conflict of interest": Any real, apparent, potential or future situation in which a director may be inclined to give preference to his or her personal interest, or the interest of a related party, to the detriment of Héma-Québec;

1.3 "Board": Héma-Québec's Board of Directors;

1.4 "Related party": Individuals related by blood, adoption or marriage, or who have been living in a conjugal relationship for at least one year, as well as any organization, partnership or other entity in which the director or his/her friends and family may have a controlling interest.

Application and interpretation

1.5 This code of ethics applies to Héma-Québec's directors.

1.6 The code of ethics is not a substitute for any statutory, regulatory or ethical provision applicable to Héma-Québec directors, including those set out in the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*.

Where such provisions differ, Héma-Québec directors shall abide by the more stringent provision. Moreover, in case of doubt, they must act in the spirit of the principles described in the provisions.

1.7 The code of ethics in no way rules out the drafting of additional guidelines or rules pertaining to certain more specific sectors of activity or situations.

2. Management duties

2.1 Directors are appointed to contribute to the fulfillment of Héma-Québec's mission as part of their mandate. In carrying out their duties, they must adhere to the obligations imposed upon them by the laws, the constitution and the rules and regulations and act within the limits of the power conferred upon them.

2.2 The director must perform his/her duties with care and reserve:

2.2.1 The director must be rigorous and independent, and act in the best interests of Héma-Québec.

2.2.2 The behaviour of a director must be impartial.

2.2.3 The director must act within the limits of his/her mandate.

2.2.4 The director must be courteous and his/her relationships must be characterized by good faith so as to maintain the trust and consideration required by his/her role.

2.2.5 The director must not in any way participate in illicit activities.

2.2.6 In the carrying out of his/her duties and responsibilities, the director must make decisions without regard for any partisan political consideration. Moreover, he/she must demonstrate restraint in the public expression of personal opinions in matters directly concerning the activities of Héma-Québec and in which the Board of Directors has been involved.

2.3 The director must act with honesty, loyalty and solidarity:

2.3.1 2.3.1 The director must act with integrity and impartiality in the best interests of Héma-Québec.

2.3.2 The director must actively take part in the development and implementation of the general directions of Héma-Québec, which in no way precludes his or her right to dissent.

2.3.3 The director must be loyal and upstanding to his/her colleagues and honest in his/her dealings with them.

2.3.4 The director must dissociate the fulfillment of his/her duties from the promotion or exercise of his/her professional or business activities, save for the President and Chief Executive Officer, who is at the exclusive service of Héma-Québec.

2.4 The director must act with skill, diligence and efficiency:

2.4.1 The director must exercise his/her skills and abilities, demonstrating diligence and effectiveness in carrying out his/her mandate. He/she must also demonstrate independent professional judgment.

2.4.2 The director is responsible and accountable for all his/her actions taken in the performance of his/her duties.

2.4.3 The director must make informed decisions, taking into account any necessary expertise if need be and considering each file in its entirety.

2.4.4 All members of the Board of Directors must actively participate in the Board's work and attend meetings regularly. They must also be assiduous when taking part in Board committees.

2.4.5 The director must show discernment in the courses of action and choices he/she favors.

2.4.5 The director must show discernment in the courses of action and choices he/she favors.

2.5 The director must act according to the rules of confidentiality:

2.5.1 The director must respect the confidential nature of any information that comes to his/her attention in the course of his/her duties or by virtue of his/her position.

The first subparagraph is not intended to restrict necessary communications between Board members.

2.5.2 The director must not use confidential information that comes to his/her attention during the course of his/her duties for the purpose of obtaining a direct or indirect advantage, now or in the future, for him/herself or a related party.

3. Conflicts of interest

General provisions

3.1 The director must at all times maintain a high level of independence and avoid any situation in which there could be a personal advantage, direct or indirect, either now or in the future, which could jeopardize his/her independence, integrity or impartiality.

3.2 The director must prevent any conflict of interest or appearance thereof and avoid putting him/herself in a position that could ultimately prevent him/her from fulfilling his/her duties.

3.3 The director must avoid any situation which could compromise his/her capacity to fulfill his/her duties in an impartial, objective, professional and independent manner.

3.4 The director shall not commingle the assets of Héma-Québec with his/her own; he/she shall not use the assets of Héma-Québec for his/her personal gain or the gain of a related party.

3.5 The director may not use Héma-Québec's services or information for his/her personal benefit or for the benefit of a related party.

3.6 The director may not exercise his/her duties in his own interest or in the interest of a related party.

3.7 The director must not accept a current or future advantage from anyone if he/she has knowledge, evidence or reason to believe that this current or future advantage is granted to him/her for the purpose of influencing his/her decision.

3.8 The director shall not make a commitment to a third or related party nor grant that party any guarantee with regard to a vote he/she may be required to cast or to any decision whatsoever that may be made by the Board of Directors.

3.9 The director must avoid any situation in which he/she could be in a conflict of interest. Without limiting the scope of the foregoing, the director:

3.9.1 Is in a conflict of interest when the interests in question are such that he/she may be brought to show preference for some of them to the detriment of Héma-Québec, or where his/her judgment and loyalty could be negatively affected.

3.9.2 Is not independent from a given decision if there is a personal advantage or advantage to a related party, now or in the future, as described in article 3.1.

Preventive measures

3.10 At the start of each meeting, the director must declare any existing conflict of interest to the Chair and ensure the disclosure is recorded in the minutes.

3.11 The President and Chief Executive Officer may not, under penalty of dismissal, have a direct or indirect interest in a corporate body, partnership or other entity which could lead to a conflict of interest between him/herself and Héma-Québec. However, dismissal shall not be invoked if the interest is devolved upon the President and Chief Executive Officer by succession or gift, provided he/she renounces it or disposes of it promptly.

Any other director having a direct or indirect interest in a corporate body, partnership, or other entity which could lead to a conflict of interest between him/herself and Héma-Québec must, under penalty of dismissal, declare this interest in writing to the Chair of the Board and, if need be, abstain from participating in any deliberation or decision related to said corporate body, partnership or other entity in which he/she has an interest. The director must also withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the deliberations and vote concerning the matter.

3.12 The director must demonstrate impartiality:

3.12.1 The director shall not solicit, accept or demand any gift, favor, other advantage or consideration, for him/herself or a related party, either directly or indirectly, now or in the future, which could compromise his/her independence, integrity or impartiality; such is the case of gifts, favors, advantages or considerations other than what is customary and of modest value.

3.12.2 The director must not award, offer to award or promise to award to a third party a gift, favor or other advantage or consideration that could compromise his/her independence, integrity or impartiality.

4. Political activities

4.1 Any director who intends to run for public office must inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.

4.2 A Chair of the Board of Directors or President and Chief Executive Officer who wishes to run for public office must tender his/her resignation.

5. Post-mandate measures

5.1 After his/her mandate expires, the director must maintain confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any non-public data, information, debate or discussion to which he/she was privy by virtue of his/her position at Héma-Québec.

5.2 In the year following the expiration of his/her mandate, the director may not participate, either on his/her own behalf or that of a third party, in a procedure, negotiation or other operation to which Héma-Québec is a party and with regard to which he/she has information that is not available to the public.

As well, the director must refrain from offering advice based on information that is not publicly available regarding Héma-Québec or another corporate body, partnership or entity with which he/she has had significant direct dealings in the course of the year preceding the conclusion of his/her mandate.

5.3 A director who has relinquished his/her duties must act in such a way so as not to reap undue advantage from his/her previous duties in the service of Héma-Québec.

6. Responsibilities and sanctions

6.1 Compliance with the code of ethics is an integral part of the duties and obligations of directors.

6.2 A director who observes an ethical failure, perceived or real, must inform the Chair of the Board of Directors. If this failure involves the Chair of the Board of Directors, the director must inform the Chair of the Governance Committee.

6.3 The Chair of Héma-Québec's Board of Directors or, in the cases involving him or her, the Chair of the Governance Committee, must investigate to ensure that the code of ethics is respected and applied.

6.4 A director who infringes upon any of the provisions in the code of ethics leaves him/herself open to the sanctions outlined in the Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders, in accordance with the procedure established in said regulation.

6.5 Héma-Québec's Board of Directors shall revise this code of ethics on an annual basis to ensure that it adequately reflects changes in the laws, rules, regulations and situations specific to Héma-Québec.

6.6 Each director undertakes to sign the code of ethics agreement form appended hereto at the start of his/her mandate and every year thereafter.

This code was adopted by the Board of Directors on May 7, 2014.

Financial statements

Summary

MANAGEMENT'S REPORT

The financial statements of Héma-Québec in this Annual Report were drawn up by Management, which is responsible for their preparation, presentation and the significant judgments and estimates included therein. This responsibility involves the selection of appropriate accounting policies that comply with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards. The financial information presented elsewhere in this Annual Report is consistent with that provided in the financial statements.

To fulfil its responsibilities, Management maintains a system of internal accounting controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and that transactions are duly approved and properly recorded on a timely basis and in a manner suitable for preparing reliable financial statements.

Héma-Québec recognizes that it is responsible for conducting its affairs in accordance with the statutes and regulations governing it.

The Board of Directors monitors the manner in which Management carries out its financial reporting responsibilities and approves the financial statements. It is assisted in its responsibilities by the Audit Committee whose members are not part of Management. The Committee meets with Management and the Auditor General of Québec, reviews the financial statements, and recommends their approval to the Board of Directors.

The Auditor General of Québec has audited the financial statements of Héma-Québec in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. His independent auditor's report states the nature and scope of the audit and expresses his opinion.

The Auditor General of Québec has full and unrestricted access to the Audit Committee to discuss any matter related to his audit.

Nathalie Fagnan, CPA

President and Chief Executive Officer

Luc Vermeersch, CPA

Vice-President, Finance and Infrastructure

Montréal, June 16, 2022

VGQ
Vérificateur général du Québec

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the National Assembly

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of Héma-Québec (the Entity), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2022, and the statement of operations and accumulated deficit, the statement of remeasurement gains and losses, the statement of change in net debt and the statement of cash flow for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at March 31, 2022, and its results of operations, its remeasurement gains and losses, its changes in net debt and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Canada, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by the *Auditor General Act* (CQLR, chapter V-5.01), I report that, in my opinion, these accounting standards have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

On behalf of the Auditor General of Québec,

Roch Guérin CPA auditor

Roch Guérin, CPA auditor
Principal

Montréal, June 16, 2022

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND ACCUMULATED DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 (in thousands of dollars)

	2022 BUDGET	2022 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL
REVENUES			
Blood products (note 3)	429,883	370,283	345,758
Grants from the Gouvernement du Québec (note 9)	67,660	55,208	70,361
Innovative products	12,175	11,403	11,769
Interest	99	118	87
SIIATH expertise	1,874	1,684	1,708
Other	6,431	4,219	5,889
	518,122	**442,915**	**435,572**
EXPENSES (note 4)			
Stable products	329,215	259,802	287,098
Labile products	137,692	126,398	98,814
Innovative products	44,675	42,678	40,001
SIIATH expertise	1,874	1,684	1,708
Expenses related to COVID	4,666	6,529	28,793
	518,122	**437,091**	**456,414**
ANNUAL OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	**–**	**5,824**	**(20,842)**
ACCUMULATED OPERATING DEFICIT, BEGINNING OF YEAR	–	(24,517)	(3,675)
ACCUMULATED OPERATING DEFICIT, END OF YEAR	**–**	**(18,693)**	**(24,517)**

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF REMEASUREMENT GAINS AND LOSSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 (in thousands of dollars)

	2022	2021
ACCUMULATED REMEASUREMENT (LOSSES) GAINS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	(11,140)	19,274
Unrealized (losses) gains attributable to:		
Derivatives	(2,928)	(26,709)
Exchange rates	27	48
Amount reclassified to operating surplus		
Derivatives	11,985	(3,248)
Exchange rates	(48)	(505)
Net remeasurement gains (losses) for the year	**9,036**	**(30,414)**
ACCUMULATED REMEASUREMENT LOSSES, END OF YEAR	**(2,104)**	**(11,140)**

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2022 (in thousands of dollars)

	2022	2021
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Cash	52,740	17,134
Accounts receivable (note 6)	6,750	8,702
Grant receivable from the Gouvernement du Québec (note 9)	–	4,488
Inventories held for sale (note 7)	133,067	111,449
	192,557	**141,773**
LIABILITIES		
Line of credit (note 10)	53,310	63,104
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 8)	47,394	50,217
Grants transferable to the Gouvernement du Québec (note 9)	7,860	–
Non-interest bearing advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	99,651	48,974
Debt (notes 10 and 11)	29,124	33,194
Employee future benefit liability (note 12)	13,021	12,842
Derivatives	2,131	11,188
	252,491	**219,519**
NET DEBT	**(59,934)**	**(77,746)**
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets (note 13)	30,243	32,896
Prepaid expenses	3,938	3,157
Supply inventories	4,956	6,036
	39,137	**42,089**
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT	**(20,797)**	**(35,657)**
Accumulated operating deficit	(18,693)	(24,517)
Accumulated remeasurement losses	(2,104)	(11,140)
	(20,797)	**(35,657)**
Contractual commitments (note 15)		
Contingencies (note 16)		

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

Anne Bourhis
Chair of the Board of the Directors

Réal Couture, FCPA
Chair of the Audit Committee

STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN NET DEBT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 (in thousands of dollars)

	2022 BUDGET	2022 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL
ANNUAL OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)		**5,824**	**(20,842)**
Changes due to tangible capital assets:			
Additions	(24,325)	(4,324)	(6,355)
Amortization for the year	8,368	6,784	6,838
Loss on disposal and write-off		193	15
	(15,957)	**2,653**	**498**
Changes due to other non-financial assets:			
Acquisition of prepaid expenses		(6,093)	(4,753)
Use of prepaid expenses		5,312	4,750
Acquisition of supply inventories		(17,898)	(21,424)
Use of supply inventories		18,978	18,466
		299	**(2,961)**
Net remeasurement gains (losses) for the year		9,036	(30,414)
Decrease (increase) in net debt	**(15,957)**	**17,812**	**(53,719)**
NET DEBT, BEGINNING OF YEAR	(77,746)	(77,746)	(24,027)
NET DEBT, END OF YEAR	**(93,703)**	**(59,934)**	**(77,746)**

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 (in thousands of dollars)

	2022	2021
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Annual operating surplus (deficit)	5,824	(20,842)
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	6,784	6,838
Effective rate debt adjustment	21	9
Loss on disposal and write-off of tangible capital assets	193	15
Unrealized foreign exchange gain on cash and non-cash working capital items denominated in foreign currencies	(21)	(457)
	12,801	**(14,437)**
Changes in assets and liabilities related to operating activities		
Accounts receivable	1,952	(534)
Inventories held for sale	(21,618)	(50,942)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(3,711)	13,730
Grants receivable from (transferable to) the Gouvernement du Québec	12,348	(12,563)
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	50,677	26,188
Employee future benefit liability	179	260
Prepaid expenses	(781)	(3)
Supply inventories	1,080	(2,958)
Cash flows related to operating activities	**52,927**	**(41,259)**
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES		
Additions to tangible capital assets	(3,436)	(6,568)
Cash flows related to capital activities	**(3,436)**	**(6,568)**
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Line of credit	(9,794)	50,082
Increase in debt	4,275	10,022
Debt repayment	(8,366)	(10,722)
Cash flows related to financing activities	**(13,885)**	**49,382**
CHANGE IN CASH	**35,606**	**1,555**
CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	17,134	15,579
CASH, END OF YEAR	**52,740**	**17,134**
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION		
Interest paid	798	815
Interest received	107	106
Additions to tangible capital assets funded by accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,570	682

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

1. INCORPORATION AND NATURE OF OPERATIONS

Héma-Québec, constituted on March 26, 1998 by letters patent issued under Part III of the *Companies Act* (CQLR, chapter C-38), is continued in accordance with the provisions of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee* (CQLR, chapter H-1.1). Héma-Québec's mission is to efficiently meet the needs of the Québec population for quality blood and other biological products of human origin. Héma-Québec operates in a regulated environment in compliance with the requirements of the *Food and Drug Act* (R.S.C. 1985, c. F-27) and its related regulations. To fulfil its mission, Héma-Québec also meets the requirements and regulations of several Canadian and international standards. Under the *Income Tax Act* (R.S.C. 1985, c. 1 (5th Supp.)) and the *Taxation Act* (CQLR, chapter 1-3), Héma-Québec is not subject to income taxes.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

For purposes of preparing financial statements, Héma-Québec mainly uses the *CPA Canada Handbook – Public Sector Accounting*. The use of any other source in the application of accounting policies must be consistent with the latter.

Use of estimates

The preparation of the financial statements of Héma-Québec in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards requires Management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the recognition of revenues and expenses for the financial statement reporting period. The main estimates consist of the useful life of capital assets, the valuation of inventories held for sale, the allowance for pay relativity and new pay increases and the employee future benefit liability. Actual results could differ from Management's best estimates.

Financial instruments

Financial instruments comprise financial assets and liabilities as well as derivatives. Their measurement depends on their classification, as described below.

Cash	Cost
Trade accounts receivable and other receivables	Cost
Grants receivable from the Gouvernement du Québec	Cost
Line of credit	Cost
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	Cost
Grants transferable to the Gouvernement du Québec	Cost
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	Cost
Derivatives	Fair value
Debt and accrued interest payable	Amortized cost using the effective interest method

Héma-Québec uses derivative financial instruments to manage currency risk. Unrealized gains and losses on foreign exchange contracts are recognized until the settlement period in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses, and upon settlement, the accumulated balance of remeasurement gains and losses is reclassified as a foreign exchange gain or loss under expenses in the statement of operations and accumulated deficit.

Fair value hierarchy

Financial instruments recorded at fair value are classified using a fair value hierarchy that reflects the significance of the inputs used in making the measurements. The fair value hierarchy requires the use of observable market data whenever available. The fair value hierarchy has the following levels:

Level 1: The fair value of the instrument is determined using quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

Level 2: The fair value of the instrument is determined using inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable either directly (i.e., as prices) or indirectly (i.e., derived from prices).

Level 3: The fair value of the instrument is determined using inputs that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

Derivative financial instruments are classified within Level 2 of the fair value hierarchy (the fair value of derivatives is based on inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e., as prices) or indirectly (i.e., derived from prices)).

REVENUES

Revenues are accounted for on an accrual basis. Revenues resulting from the sale of products are recognized once all the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to clients, while revenues from services are recognized as the services are rendered.

Revenues derived from Gouvernement du Québec grants are recognized in the period where events giving rise to such revenues occurred, provided the grants are authorized and all eligibility criteria, if any, are met.

EXPENSES

Employee benefit plans

Héma-Québec offers its employees defined benefit pension plans. Contributions are made by both Héma-Québec and plan members. Certain employees also have defined contribution plans. In addition, Héma-Québec provides its employees with certain post-employment benefits reported under "other plans," while providing certain retirees with health and life insurance benefits.

The cost of retirement benefits for the period is actuarially determined using the projected benefit method prorated on service. The cost of retirement benefits is measured using net current period benefit cost, amortization of actuarial gains and losses, and employee future benefit obligation interest expense, less the expected return on plan assets. Plan amendments give rise to a past service cost, which is recognized as an expense in the year of the amendments, net of the unamortized balance of discounted gains or losses, if any.

Employee future benefit obligations are actuarially determined using the projected benefit method prorated on services and Management's best estimates as to the expected rate return on plan investments, inflation rate, discount rate, rate of compensation increase, employee retirement ages and assumed health care cost trends.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont'd)

Employee benefit plans (cont'd)

Assets and expected return on plan assets are valued using a five-year smoothed market value method.

Actuarial gains or losses arise from, in particular, the difference between the actual return on plan assets and the expected return on plan assets, as well as the difference between plan experience and the actuarial assumptions used to determine the employee future benefit obligation, as well as changes to these assumptions. Actuarial gains and losses are amortized over the average expected remaining service life of participating employees.

A valuation allowance is recorded for any excess of the adjusted value of the accrued benefit asset (that is, the value of the accrued benefit asset less unamortized net actuarial losses) over the expected future benefit (that is, any withdrawable surplus or reduction in future contributions).

An employee future benefit asset or liability is presented in the statement of financial position to reflect the difference at year-end between the value of employee future benefit obligations and the value of plan assets, net of unamortized actuarial gains and losses and valuation allowance.

FINANCIAL ASSETS

Cash

Héma-Québec's policy consists in presenting in the cash line item bank balances, including bank overdrafts whose balances fluctuate from being positive to overdrawn and are used to make up for cash deficiencies when they are held by the same institution.

Inventories held for sale

Inventories held for sale, consisting of stocks of blood products (labile and stable) and innovative products (cord blood and human tissues), are measured at the lower of cost and net recoverable amount, with cost determined using the average cost method. The net recoverable amount is the estimated selling price less costs to sell.

Foreign currency translation

Foreign currency transactions are accounted for at the average monthly exchange rate. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currency are translated at the exchange rate in effect on the statement of financial position date, whereas non-monetary items are translated at the historical average monthly exchange rate. Exchange rate fluctuations give rise to foreign exchange gains or losses that are recognized until the settlement period in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses and, upon settlement, the accumulated balance of remeasurement gains or losses is reclassified as a foreign exchange gain or loss under expenses in the statement of operations or accumulated deficit.

LIABILITIES

Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) annually confirms a budgetary level with Héma-Québec for the acquisition of blood products by hospitals. Héma-Québec therefore records, under Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec, the amounts received from the MSSS, which acts as a third party payor for the purchase of labile and stable products on behalf of hospitals. Any payment below the proceeds from sales of blood products to hospitals becomes an amount receivable from the government, while any payment exceeding the sales of blood products to hospitals is recovered in accordance with a timeline agreed upon between the MSSS and Héma-Québec.

NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

By their nature, the non-financial assets of Héma-Québec are normally used to provide future services.

Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, which consists of expenses directly attributable to their acquisition, and amortized on a straight-line basis over their useful lives commencing on the date they are ready for commissioning, using the following periods:

Building, betterment to building and other	from 10 to 40 years
Machinery and automotive equipment	5 and 10 years
Office furniture and equipment	5 and 10 years
Computer hardware and software	3 years
Systems development	5 and 7 years

Land and tangible capital assets under construction or development are not amortized.

When conditions indicate that a tangible capital asset no longer contributes to Héma-Québec's ability to provide goods and services, or that the value of future economic benefits associated with the tangible capital asset is less than its net book value, the cost of the tangible capital asset is reduced to reflect the decline in the asset's value. Writedowns are accounted for as expenses for the year in the statement of operations and accumulated deficit and are subsequently not reversed.

INTER-ENTITY TRANSACTIONS

Inter-entity transactions are transactions entered into between entities controlled or subject to joint control by the Gouvernement du Québec.

Assets received for no consideration from a Gouvernement du Québec reporting entity are recognized at their carrying amount. Services received at no cost are not recognized. The other inter-entity transactions were carried out at the exchange amount, which is the amount of the consideration agreed for the item transferred or service provided.

3. BLOOD PRODUCTS

The budgeted prices for all blood products are submitted every year to the Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales (CAG), which is the joint procurement group designated by the Minister of Health and Social Services under Division VI of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*. Following consultations with the Blood System Procurement and Financing Management Committee (PFMC), the budgeted prices are confirmed by CAG. The PFMC is an advisory committee to the Direction de la biovigilance, which falls under the purview of the Direction générale des services de santé et médecine universitaire. The PFMC's role is to make recommendations on financial and accounting issues relating to the supply of blood products.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

4. EXPENSES

	STABLE PRODUCTS	LABILE PRODUCTS	INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS[1]	SIIATH EXPERTISE[2]	COVID	2022 TOTAL	2021 TOTAL
Stable products	212,038	–	–	–	–	212,038	248,203
Salaries and benefits	5,894	106,037	12,077	1,366	2,578	127,952	125,173
Blood drives	1,932	15,313	240	–	11	17,496	16,872
Medical supplies	130	11,806	5,141	–	123	17,200	16,575
Purchased services	18,054	(22,503)	16,302	305	1,126	13,284	7,998
Buildings and premises	40	11,169	271	–	455	11,935	11,800
Foreign exchange loss (gain)	11,490	66	192	–	–	11,748	(2,451)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	648	5,754	357	5	20	6,784	6,838
Freight and shipping	65	4,590	773	–	856	6,284	5,807
Purchase of cord blood, stem cells, labile products and human tissues	–	–	6,099	–	–	6,099	6,815
Other expenses	103	3,306	376	–	1,272	5,057	6,155
Advertising and public relations	21	4,852	36	–	20	4,929	4,198
Information technology	1	4,295	1	8	–	4,305	4,447
Insurance	–	1,160	–	–	–	1,160	872
Interest on long-term debt	–	584	–	–	–	584	718
Other interest and bank charges	–	197	1	–	68	266	151
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	–	193	–	–	–	193	15
Subtotal	**250,416**	**146,819**	**41,866**	**1,684**	**6,529**	**447,314**	**460,186**
Plasma for fractionation[3]	21,081	(21,081)	–	–	–	–	–
Change in inventories[4]	(11,695)	660	812	–	–	(10,223)	(3,772)
Total	**259,802**	**126,398**	**42,678**	**1,684**	**6,529**	**437,091**	**456,414**

[1] Innovative products comprise the following activity sectors: stem cells, human tissues and mother's milk.
[2] SIIATH expertise includes activities related to the Système d'information intégré sur les activités transfusionnelles et d'hémovigilance awarded by the MSSS.
[3] Some expenses related to plasma extraction are reallocated to stable products based on litres of plasma shipped to the fractionator.
[4] Change in inventories includes plasma for fractionation, labile products, cord blood and human tissues.

5. ACCUMULATED OPERATING SURPLUS

As required by the provisions of section 25 of the *Act respecting Héma-Québec and the biovigilance committee*, any funding surpluses resulting from the application of prices are paid into the General Fund of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, unless a prior agreement between the Minister of Health and Social Services and Héma-Québec is entered into on the use of the surplus.

6. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

	2022	2021
Trade accounts receivable	2,716	3,688
Commodity taxes	2,623	2,276
Other receivables	1,411	2,738
	6,750	**8,702**

7. INVENTORIES HELD FOR SALE

	2022	2021
Stable products	90,262	78,865
Plasma for fractionation	37,477	26,032
Labile products	2,008	2,420
Human tissues	1,951	1,724
Cord blood	1,369	2,408
	133,067	**111,449**

8. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2022	2021
Trade accounts payable	21,090	23,745
Salaries payable and accrued vacation	20,987	20,766
Benefits	4,433	4,798
Deferred revenues	844	860
Accrued interest payable	40	48
	47,394	**50,217**

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

9. GRANTS RECEIVABLE FROM AND GRANTS TRANSFERABLE TO THE GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC

	2022	2021
(Grants receivable) grants transferable, beginning of year	(4,488)	8,075
Grants received	67,556	65,873
Grants recognized as revenue	(55,208)	(70,361)
MSSS recovery	–	(8,075)
Grants transferable (grants receivable), end of year	**7,860**	**(4,488)**

10. CREDIT FACILITIES

Héma-Québec was authorized by the Minister of Health and Social Services to establish a borrowing plan under section 78 of the *Financial Administration Act* (CQLR, chapter A-6.001). Under this borrowing plan, Héma-Québec may borrow over the short term or under line of credit from financial institutions or the Québec Minister of Finance, as manager of the Financing Fund, and over the long term from said Minister.

The authorized amount for the April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024 period is for requirements not exceeding $133.9 million. The authorized amount for the previous plan ending March 31, 2022 was $170.96 million. The borrowings provided for under this plan serve primarily to fund bank overdrafts, asset acquisitions and renewals, loan renewals and the implementation of product safety improvement projects. Héma-Québec's borrowing terms comprise rates similar or equivalent to Gouvernement du Québec rates. Under this plan, Héma-Québec drew down $53 million on its line of credit as at March 31, 2022 ($63 million as at March 31, 2021). The interest rate for this line of credit was 0.86% as at March 31, 2022.

Héma-Québec also has a $15 million revolving line of credit with a financial institution under terms that may be changed at the bank's option. As at March 31, 2022 and 2021, this line of credit, which is repayable at any time, was undrawn. The line of credit bears interest at the bank's prime rate less 0.25%.

11. DEBT

	2022	2021
Borrowings from the Financing Fund repayable in monthly instalments of 597 (principal only) (568 in 2021), at fixed rates ranging from 0.73% to 3.31% (0.74% to 3.31% in 2021), maturing from 2023 to 2046	27,039	29,704
Borrowings from the Financing Fund repayable in monthly instalments of 22 (principal only) (54 in 2021), at a fixed rate of 1.80% (ranging from 2.98% to 3.93% in 2021), renewable in 2023 and maturing in 2030	2,085	3,490
	29,124	**33,194**

Assuming renewal under the same terms, principal repayments on debt over the upcoming fiscal years are as follows:

2023	7,031
2024	6,025
2025	4,231
2026	3,554
2027	2,067
2028 and thereafter	6,310

12. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY

Héma-Québec has several funded and unfunded defined benefit plans to ensure that pension, post-retirement and post-employment benefits are paid to most employees. Actuarial valuations of the retirement plans were carried out as at December 31, 2019. The employee future benefit obligations shown as at March 31, 2022 and retirement benefit expense for the fiscal year then ended are based on an extrapolation of the latest actuarial valuations.

The defined benefit plans are based on years of service and final average salary. They also provide for partial indexation of pension benefits based on inflation.

The actuarial valuations of the other post-retirement and post-employment benefit plans were carried out as at March 31, 2022. The employee future benefit obligations shown as at March 31, 2022 and retirement benefit expense for the fiscal year then ended are based on that latest actuarial valuation.

Héma-Québec also has defined contribution plans under which the commitment is limited to the total value of the individual accounts of plan participants. No expense was recognized in these plans during the year.

Actuarial gains and losses are amortized over the expected average remaining service life of active participating employees, which is 12 years for the unionized employee pension plan, 15 years for the non-unionized employee pension plan, 6 years for the supplemental pension plan, 13 years for post-retirement benefits and 2 years for post-employment benefits.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

12. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY (cont'd)

CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY

	2022	2021
Pension plans	5,852	5,284
Other plans	7,169	7,558
Total employee future benefit liability	**13,021**	**12,842**

RECONCILIATION OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2022		2021	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Pension plan assets	313,481	–	295,409	–
Employee future benefit obligation	277,997	5,711	269,339	6,137
Surplus (deficit) position	**35,484**	**(5,711)**	**26,070**	**(6,137)**
Unamortized actuarial gains	(12,908)	(1,458)	(7,034)	(1,421)
Valuation allowance	(28,428)	–	(24,320)	–
Employee future benefit liability, end of year	**(5,852)**	**(7,169)**	**(5,284)**	**(7,558)**

EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT OBLIGATION

	2022		2021	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Employee future benefit obligation, beginning of year	269,339	6,137	253,964	6,090
Current period benefit cost	15,501	3,910	13,942	3,532
Interest expense on obligation	14,211	71	13,126	65
Benefits paid	(11,242)	(4,370)	(10,024)	(3,413)
Actuarial gain	(9,812)	(38)	(1,669)	(137)
Employee future benefit obligation, end of year	**277,997**	**5,710**	**269,339**	**6,137**

PENSION PLAN ASSETS

	2022		2021	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Pension plan assets, beginning of year	295,409	–	275,291	–
Employer contributions	10,298	–	9,955	–
Employee contributions	6,744	–	6,139	–
Expected return on plan assets	15,810	–	14,473	–
Benefits paid	(11,242)	–	(10,024)	–
Actuarial loss on assets	(3,538)	–	(425)	–
Pension plan assets, end of year	**313,481**	**–**	**295,409**	**–**

FAIR VALUE OF PLAN ASSETS AS AT MARCH 31

	2022		2021	
Bonds	49,925	16%	37,908	13%
Shares	41,857	14%	36,274	12%
Other	214,552	70%	219,301	75%
Total	**306,334**	**100%**	**293,483**	**100%**

ACTUAL RETURN ON PLAN ASSETS

	2022	2021
Expected return on plan assets	15,810	14,473
Actual return on plan assets	12,272	14,048
Actuarial loss on assets	**(3,538)**	**(425)**
Actual rate of return	4.11%	5.05%

EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR

	2022		2021	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Current period net benefit cost	8,757	3,910	7,803	3,532
Amortization of actuarial gains	(400)	–	(79)	–
Change in valuation allowance	4,108	–	3,653	–
Benefit expense	**12,465**	**3,910**	**11,377**	**3,532**
Interest expense on obligation	14,211	71	13,126	65
Expected return on plan assets	(15,810)	–	(14,473)	–
Benefit interest expense	**(1,599)**	**71**	**(1,347)**	**65**
Total benefit expense	**10,866**	**3,981**	**10,030**	**3,597**

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

12. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFIT LIABILITY (cont'd)

SIGNIFICANT ASSUMPTIONS

	2022		2021	
	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS	PENSION PLANS	OTHER PLANS
Employee future benefit obligation as at March 31				
Discount rate	5.50%	3.10%	5.30%	2.20%
Rate of compensation increase	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
Inflation rate	2.00%	–	2.00%	–
Benefit expense for the years ended March 31				
Discount rate	5.30%	2.20%	5.20%	2.00%
Expected rate of return on plan assets	5.30%	-	5.20%	–
Rate of compensation increase	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
Demographic factors				
Mortality	CPM-2014 projected using improvement scale CPM-B		CPM-2014 projected using improvement scale CPM-B	

13. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	2022						
	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
Cost							
Opening balance	2,140	52,364	31,719	5,159	12,132	18,028	121,542
Additions	–	1,463	1,545	20	870	426	4,324
Disposals and write-off	–	(854)	(762)	(406)	(505)	(696)	(3,223)
Closing balance*	**2,140**	**52,973**	**32,502**	**4,773**	**12,497**	**17,758**	**122,643**
Accumulated amortization							
Opening balance	–	35,144	24,148	4,539	9,607	15,208	88,646
Amortization for the year	–	2,629	1,648	102	1,125	1,280	6,784
Disposals and write-off	–	(754)	(733)	(406)	(441)	(696)	(3,030)
Closing balance	**–**	**37,019**	**25,063**	**4,235**	**10,291**	**15,792**	**92,400**
Net carrying amount	**2,140**	**15,954**	**7,439**	**538**	**2,206**	**1,966**	**30,243**

	2021						
	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
Cost							
Opening balance	2,140	49,817	30,889	5,020	13,538	17,653	119,057
Additions	–	2,547	964	139	1,858	847	6,355
Disposals and write-off	–	–	(134)	–	(3,264)	(472)	(3,870)
Closing balance*	**2,140**	**52,364**	**31,719**	**5,159**	**12,132**	**18,028**	**121,542**
Accumulated amortization							
Opening balance	–	32,611	22,364	4,447	11,927	14,314	85,663
Amortization for the year	–	2,533	1,903	92	944	1,366	6,838
Disposals and write-off	–	–	(119)	–	(3,264)	(472)	(3,855)
Closing balance	**–**	**35,144**	**24,148**	**4,539**	**9,607**	**15,208**	**88,646**
Net carrying amount	**2,140**	**17,220**	**7,571**	**620**	**2,525**	**2,820**	**32,896**

*The closing balance includes the following tangible capital assets under development:

	LAND	BUILDING, BETTERMENT TO BUILDING AND OTHER	MACHINERY AND AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
2022	–	1,309	304	–	68	308	1,989
2021	–	2,347	313	113	660	710	4,143

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

14. RISK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Risk management

In the normal course of its operations, Héma-Québec is exposed to various financial risks, described below. Management assesses these risks and implements strategies to minimize their impact on its performance.

I. Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one entity's failure to discharge an obligation under a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party. Héma-Québec is exposed to credit risk resulting from the possibility that parties may default on their financial obligations, where there is a concentration of transactions with a same party or a concentration of third-party financial obligations with similar economic characteristics that would be affected in the same way by future developments. Héma-Québec's financial instruments exposed to credit risk include the following line items: cash, trade accounts receivable and other receivables.

The credit risk associated with cash is limited as the counterparty is a Canadian chartered bank which has been assigned a high credit rating by national rating agencies.

Credit risk arising from trade accounts receivable is limited as they primarily involve public bodies that are Gouvernement du Québec reporting entities. Such receivables are collectible during the following year.

Other receivables primarily include amounts receivable under contractual agreements with suppliers and a client. Credit risk is limited as these receivables are provided for under the contracts and Héma-Québec has met its purchase obligations. These amounts are collectible within 60 days after the end of the fiscal year.

The credit risk arising from grants receivable from the Gouvernement du Québec is limited as they have already been granted to Héma-Québec by the Gouvernement du Québec. These grants are collectible during the following year.

The carrying amount in the statement of financial position of Héma-Québec's financial instruments exposed to credit risk represents the maximum amount of credit risk to which the organization is exposed and totalled $56.9 million ($33.9 million in 2021). None of these financial instruments was impaired and Management estimates that the credit quality of all instruments which have not been impaired or are not past due is strong as at the date of the financial statements (none as at March 31, 2021).

II. Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that Héma-Québec will not have the necessary funds to meet a demand for cash or fund its obligations associated with financial liabilities as they come due. Liquidity risk also includes the risk that Héma-Québec will not be able to liquidate its financial assets on a timely basis at a reasonable price.

Héma-Québec actively manages its cash generated from its operations and believes it has sufficient liquidity and credit facilities to ensure the necessary funds to meet its current and long-term financial obligations at a reasonable cost, if required. Credit facilities are disclosed in note 10.

As at March 31, 2022 and 2021, the contractual maturities of the financial liabilities were as follows:

2022

	2023	2024	2025 AND THEREAFTER	TOTAL	CARRYING VALUE
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	42,077	–	–	42,077	42,077
Line of credit	53,310	–	–	53,310	53,310
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	99,651	–	–	99,651	99,651
Interest on debt	514	392	1,189	2,095	2,189
Debt	7,031	6,025	16,162	29,218	29,124
Total non-derivative financial instruments	**202,583**	**6,417**	**17,351**	**226,351**	**226,351**
Derivative financial instruments	2,131	–	–	2,131	2,131
Total financial instruments	**204,714**	**6,417**	**17,351**	**228,482**	**228,482**

2021

	2022	2023	2025 AND THEREAFTER	TOTAL	CARRYING VALUE
Trade accounts payable, salaries payable and accrued vacation	44,511	–	–	44,511	44,511
Line of credit	63,104	–	–	63,104	63,104
Advance from the Gouvernement du Québec	48,974	–	–	48,974	48,974
Interest on debt	601	461	1,378	2,440	2,558
Debt	7,411	6,453	19,445	33,309	33,194
Total non-derivative financial instruments	**164,601**	**6,914**	**20,823**	**192,338**	**192,341**
Derivative financial instruments	11,188	–	–	11,188	11,188
Total des instruments financiers	**175,789**	**6,914**	**20,823**	**203,526**	**203,529**

III. Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the market value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk is threefold, comprising interest rate risk, currency risk and other price risk.

Héma-Québec is exposed to interest rate risk and currency risk.

Interest rate risk:

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flow of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

Héma-Québec is exposed to the risk associated with changes in interest rates with respect to its line of credit bearing interest at a variable rate. As at March 31, 2022, if the interest rate in effect had increased or decreased by 10%, the variation in operating surplus would not have been material.

Héma-Québec's debt bears interest on a fixed rate basis. Accordingly, Héma-Québec's exposure to interest rate risk related to its cash flows is minimal, as Héma-Québec does not intend to early repay debt.

Currency risk:

In the normal course of operations, Héma-Québec purchases its stable products primarily in U.S. dollars and is therefore exposed to fluctuations in that currency. Héma-Québec has established a currency risk management policy and enters into derivative financial instruments to manage currency risk exposures particularly through foreign exchange contracts.

Notes to financial statements – Year ended March 31, 2022 (tabular amounts are in thousands of dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

14. RISK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (cont'd)

III. Market risk (cont'd)

Currency risk (cont'd):

To manage the currency risk related to the purchase of stable products, medical supplies, blood drive supplies, stem cells, cord blood and human tissues, Héma-Québec entered into 26 foreign exchange contracts to cover 90% of its expected foreign currency requirements in an amount of US$182 million at a rate of 1.2613 for the period from April 7, 2022 to March 23, 2023 (in 2021, 26 foreign exchange contracts for an amount of US$198 million at a rate of 1.3140 for the period from April 1, 2021 to March 17, 2022).

As at March 31, 2022, unrealized losses on foreign exchange contracts in the amount of $2.1 million were recognized in the statement of remeasurement gains and losses (unrealized gains of $11.2 million as at March 31, 2021) and were measured based on the difference between the foreign currency contract purchase rates and the rate of 1.2496 (unadjusted) quoted in an active market for identical instruments (1.2575 as at March 31, 2021).

The statement of financial position includes the following amounts in Canadian dollars with respect to financial assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies:

	2022	2021
U.S. DOLLARS		
Cash	2,828	2,623
Trade accounts receivable and other receivables	229	1,270
Trade accounts payable	4,504	5,200
EUROS		
Trade accounts payable	39	476
OTHER CURRENCIES		
Trade accounts payable	4	7

Based on the financial assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies held by Héma-Québec as at the date of the financial statements, a 3% change in the U.S. dollar exchange rate (3% in 2021), corresponding to market volatility in the last 12 months, would not have any material effect on the operating surplus or on the remeasurement gains and losses.

15. CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS

Héma-Québec has entered into long-term leases expiring at various dates over the next 16 years for its operating facilities and administrative premises. In some instances, the leases for premises include renewal options of up to 10 years. The lease expense for the premises for the year ended March 31, 2022 amounted to $3.5 million ($3.5 million in 2021).

Future minimum payments under long-term leases total $29.2 million ($30.2 million as at March 31, 2021) and are as follows:

2023	3,600
2024	3,331
2025	2,777
2026	2,636
2027	3,025
2028 and thereafter	13,788

16. CONTINGENCIES

Héma-Québec is exposed to various claims and legal actions in the normal course of operations. Management believes that potential outlays arising from those disputes have been sufficiently provisioned and foresees no adverse material effect on the financial position or results of Héma-Québec.

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Héma-Québec is related to all entities controlled or jointly controlled by the Gouvernement du Québec. It is also related to its key management personnel, their close relatives and to entities for which one or more of these persons have the power to determine the financial and administrative decisions. Key management personnel consist of members of the Board of Directors and Management Committee and the President and Chief Executive Officer of Héma-Québec.

Héma-Québec has entered into no significant transactions with related parties at a value different from that which would have been arrived at had the parties not been related.

HÉMA-QUÉBEC

www.hema-quebec.qc.ca

The 2020–2021 Annual Report is published by the Direction stratégique des communications intégrées.

Edition
Laurent Paul Ménard

Coordination and research
Julie Vaudry

Writting
Paul Gilbert

Revision and translation
Services d'édition Guy Connolly

Graphic design
Stanko Josimov

Photos
Marc Couture
Stanko Josimov

Montréal facility
4045, boulevard Côte-Vertu
Montréal (Québec) H4R 2W7

Québec City facility
1070, avenue des Sciences-de-la-Vie
Québec (Québec) G1V 5C3

Héma-Québec's licence numbers
100862-A (Montréal facility)
100862-B (Québec City facility)

Legal deposit
Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2022
Bibliothèque et Archives Canada, 2022

ISSN 1929-5308 (PDF version)