

Recruiting donors from Ethnic Minorities: a Multi-Step Training Program for Blood Supply Agencies

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Few facts about Héma-Québec



8 blood drives/day

1,000 donations/day

*83% Mobile clinics
13% Fixed sites (3)
4% Bloodmobiles*

Québec
7,700,000 residents
1,541,000 km²

BLOOD PRODUCTS

April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012



Products delivered to hospitals

526,000

Blood product donations

306,000

Blood drive organizing committees

1,700

Number of blood drives

2,000

Volunteers

16,000

Research Chair on Social Aspects of Blood Donation



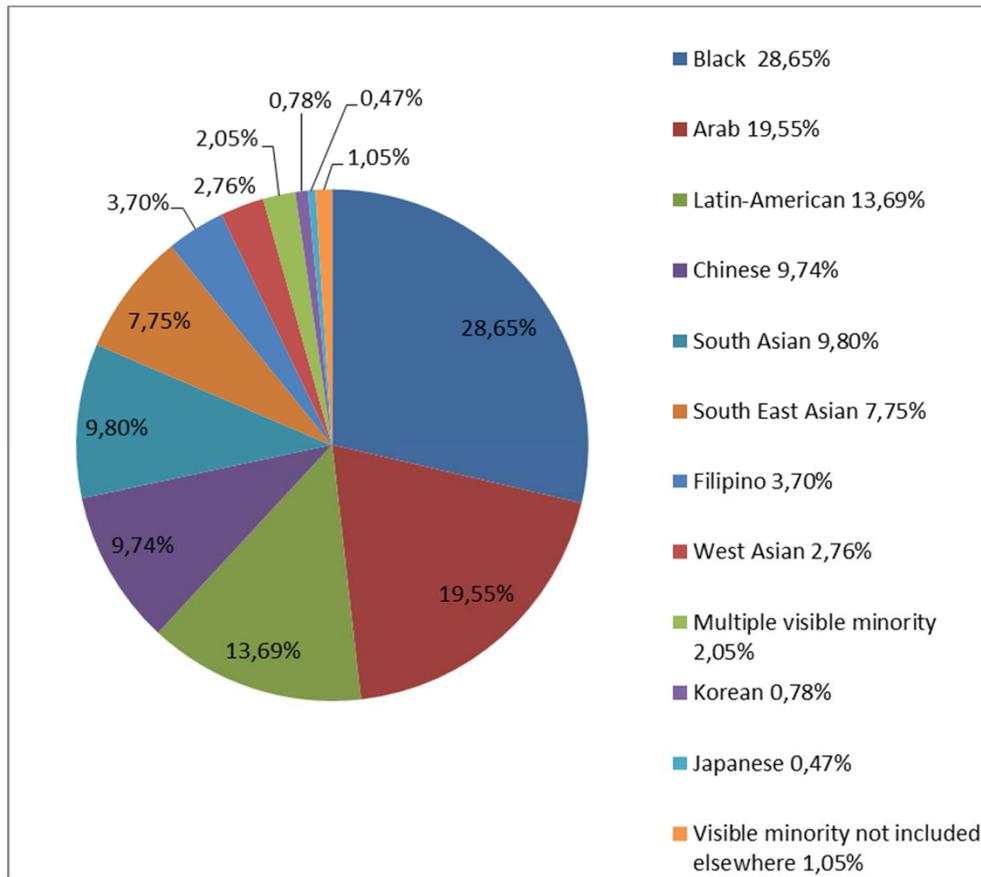
- Creation : 2009
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS)
- Funded by : Héma-Québec, INRS, Héma-Québec Foundation, SSHRC
- 5 years program & 10 research projects for :

A better understanding of the social dynamics surrounding blood donation

- One research project on:

Blood donation among ethno-cultural communities in Montreal

Situation analysis



- Distribution of visible minorities according to their origin group, people 15 years' old and over, Québec 2011

Situation analysis cont.



The most frequently cited **obstacles** to blood donations :

- Very high rate of refusal in certain groups
- Reluctance/criticism about procedures and the experience of donating blood
- Lack of information on the blood collection system
- Absence of appeals from the agency
- Problems of economic and social integration
- Cultural references not conducive to donation between strangers
- Cultural or religious taboos about blood
- Fear of contamination risks, linked with the memory of events in the country of origin
- Reluctance of the Agency to take into account specific cultural or religious

Increasing blood donation from the black communities



Objective:

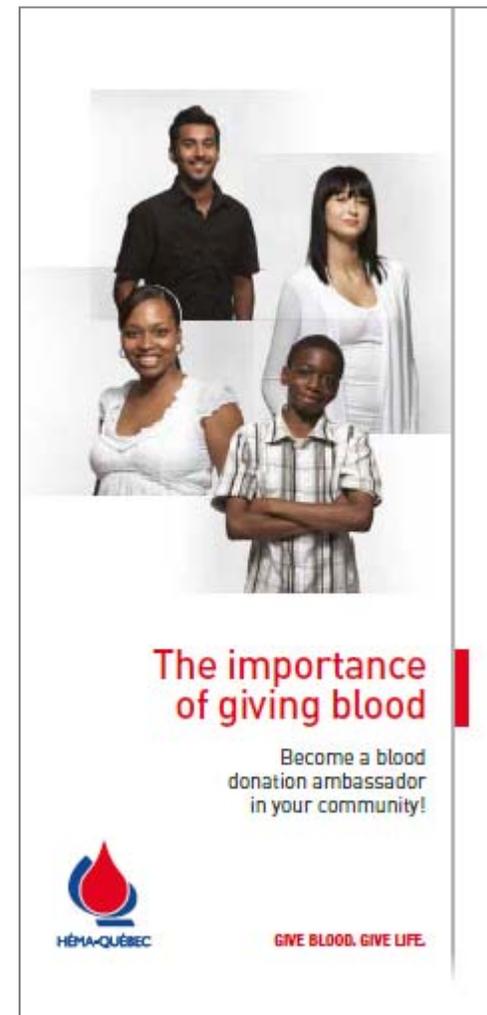
- Finding donors who will be compatible with patients suffering from sickle-cell anemia (mainly present in black populations)
- Black population is underrepresented as blood donors in Quebec.
- At 53%, French-speaking Haitians make up the largest population of Blacks in Quebec.
- During the contaminated blood affair, Canadian health authorities asked Haitians to voluntarily refrain from giving blood..

*Recruiting blood donors from the Haitian community in Quebec :
a great challenge*

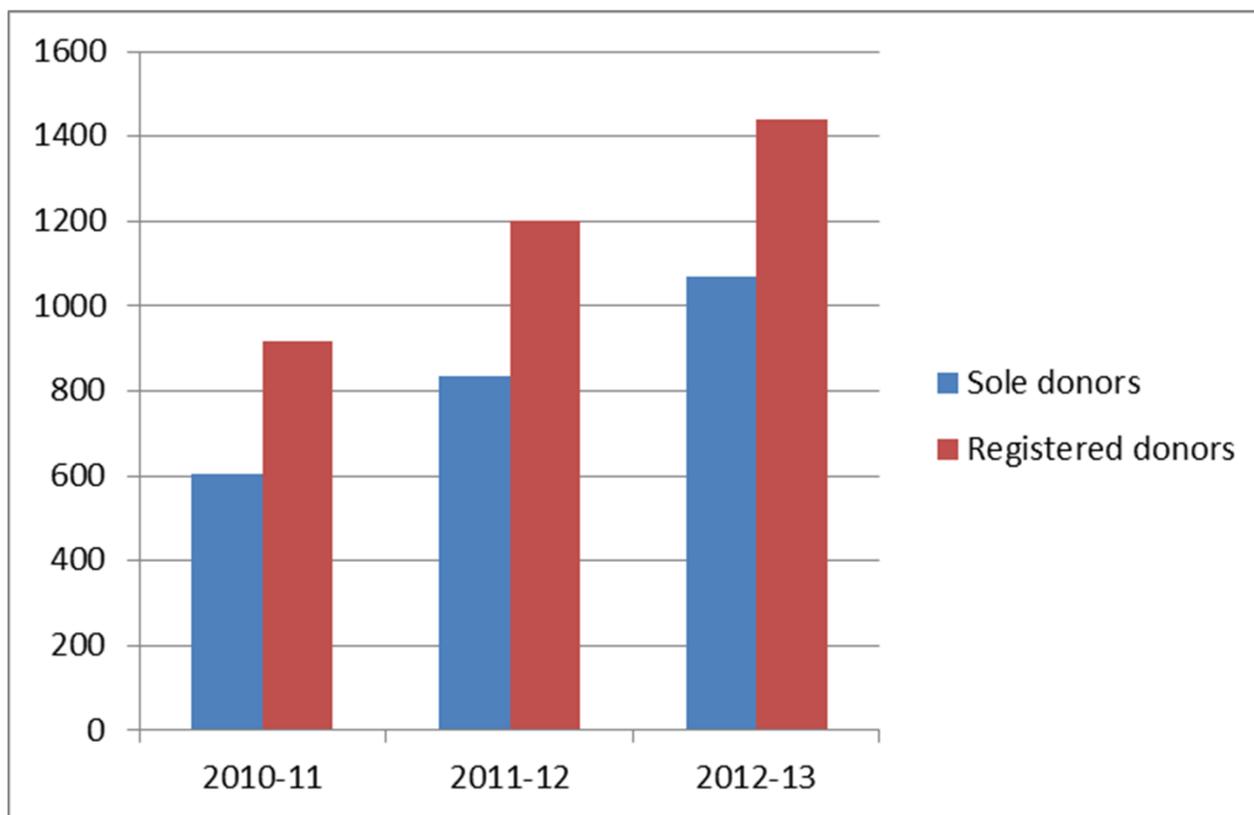
Increasing blood donation from the black communities



- Forums with leaders
- Participation and sponsorships of cultural and community events,
- Targeted presentations in different communities
- Discussion groups
- Media awareness campaign
- Targeted marketing
- Tours of facilities



Results



Donors from the black community

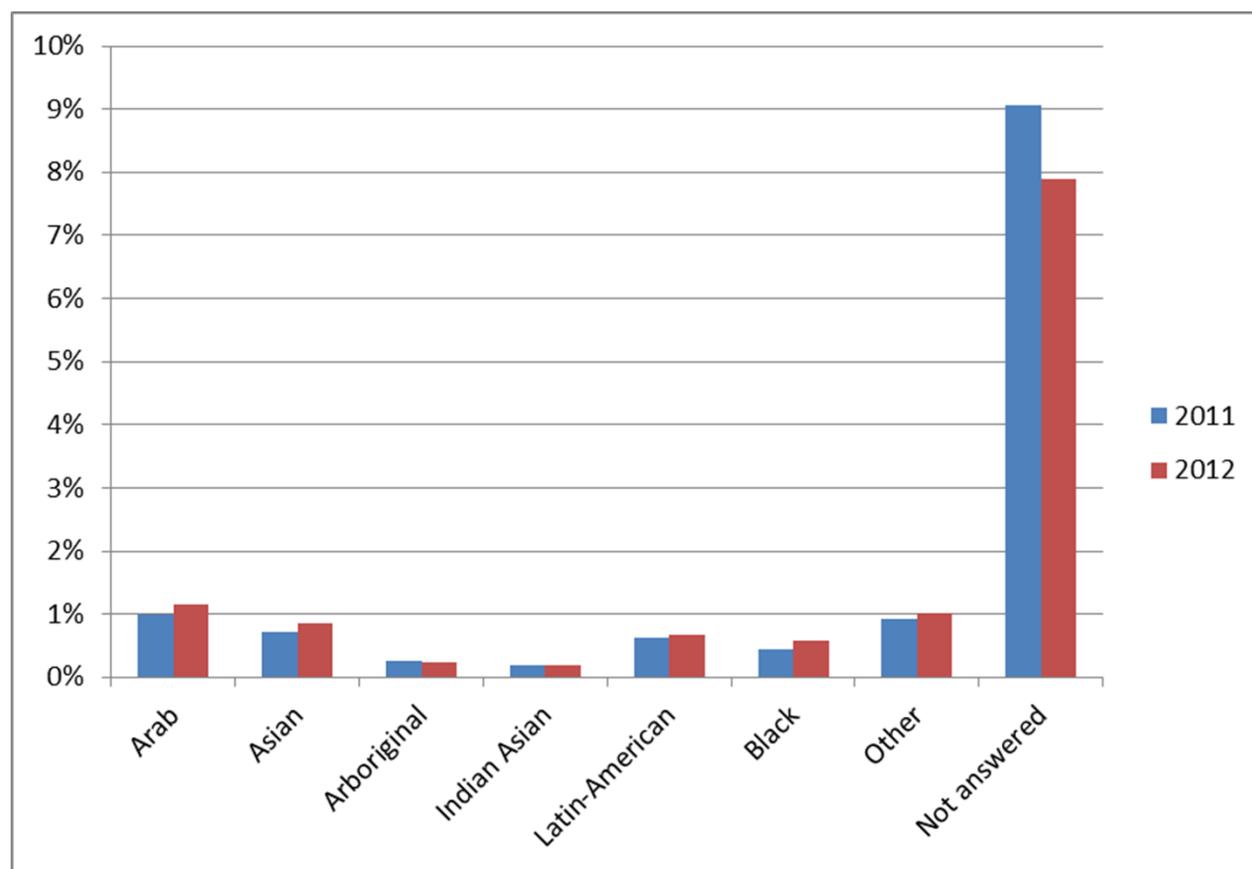
Diversifying our donor base



With the changes in Québec's demographics:

- Need to involve donors coming from all different backgrounds in our collective blood supply.
 - 88% of our blood donations come from the white community
- Need for our marketing and recruitment strategies to reflect the changes in our population demographics, specially in Montreal urban area.

Results



Donor profile

Some new challenges - Employee's point of view



In 2009 and 2012 indicated that:

- More donation refusals to be 'managed';
- Low number of donors = low employee averages (quotas);
- More pressures for evening and weekend sessions;
- Employees feel very welcome in these ethnic associations, but :
 - Their sense is that there are many religious, cultural and social restrictions in line with blood donation;
 - and that Héma-Québec must change many of its usual practices in order for these blood drives to be consistent with the associations' expectations;
- Certain employees have admitted that they sometimes go 'beyond' the stated expectations.

Employee's point of view



- They want clear guidelines from their managers
- They are not familiar with such communities, associations and leaders
- They wonder about the agency's motives for recruiting these donors:
 - Supply insufficient ? Particular medical needs ? Politically-correctness?
 - Reasons for recruiting donors from different ethnic groups : much less clear than for black populations.
- They want more information
 - To better welcome donors
 - To understand their questions and references.
- They need diminish uneasiness and prejudices, as well as **boost their confidence**
 - They are always afraid of committing a faux-pas.

General observations



- No clear priorities have been established until now.
- Not realistic to reproduce, with each group, the model developed to recruit donors from the Black population.
- Building donor loyalty is still a challenge.
- According to the international literature, as well as our research findings:
 - Relationships to blood (culture, motivations and practices) vary from one group to another and
 - As a result, recruitment efforts should be varied;
 - It is not always an 'obligation' to change the organization's usual strategies;
 - Regardless of the chosen strategy, all need more information on these groups.

Developing a plan. A Global Approach



3 objectives:

- Recruiting new donors
- Ensuring their satisfaction & developing their loyalty
- Helping employees developing self-confidence

Staff training in 6 steps

- One to four themes selected to achieve the specific objective of each step

Step 1 : To contribute to raising the confidence of staff



Target :

- All departments involved in this plan

Themes:

- The vocabulary of ethnicity
- Immigration policies in Canada and Quebec
- Intercultural mediation in health settings

Step 2 : To establish priorities based on convincing medical data



Target :

- Management & Blood Drive Planning
- All employees who need to understand 'why'
- Employees working at blood drives and involved in exclusion cases (raising their confidence)

Themes:

- Diseases and rare blood
- Geography of permanent and temporary bans

Step 3 : To determine the elements of ethnicity-related issues relevant for blood donation



Target :

- Management & Blood Drive Planning

Main theme:

- Immigration dynamics, socio-demographic profiles & blood donation
 - Size of the community
 - Proficiency in the official languages
 - Sociocultural issues
 - Religious practice
 - Group's residence concentration
 - Associations vitality, communication channels and representative capacity of leaders

Step 4 : To better understand each targeted community in order to develop tailored-made strategies



Target :

- Management & Blood Drive Planning
- All employees who need to better understand those donors' references and questions

Themes:

- Principles of blood donation & blood collection systems in various countries
- Profiles & behaviours of blood donors belonging to ethnic minorities in Quebec
- Geography of ethnic communities & places of worship

Step 5 : To provide clear indications about the intention of developing alternative strategies



Target :

- Management
- All employees who need clear guidelines

Themes:

- Big questions in need of clear answers
 - Specific needs or collective reserve ?
 - Religious duty, collective pressure or altruism ?
 - Political, religious or strategic interest or civic participation ?
 - Compromises or not in organizing blood drives ?
 - Specific protocols to manage confidentiality issues ?

Step 6 : To choose the best strategies consistent for each targeted community



Target :

- All departments

Themes:

Three approaches to develop targeted strategies

1. Traditional individual approach
2. Intermediate approach
3. Collective approach

The example of the Latin American community : main characteristics



Latin American population in Quebec (in 2011)

116,380 people

Successive migratory waves over the past 40 years

Main countries of origin :

Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru & Chile

A visible minority with the Spanish language as unifying element

2,6 % of the overall population in the Montreal area
3rd largest & 2nd fastest growing visible minority

Small groups; better to consider them as a whole

Out of all permanent immigrants :

10% of skilled workers, 12 % of family reunification cases,
29% of refugees

Latin American Community: their medical profile for blood donation



- **Mexicans : O group widespread**
 - But most often : temporary workers (farm)
- **Those who make the most trips to their country of origin**
 - Risk of temporary exclusion : very high (malaria)

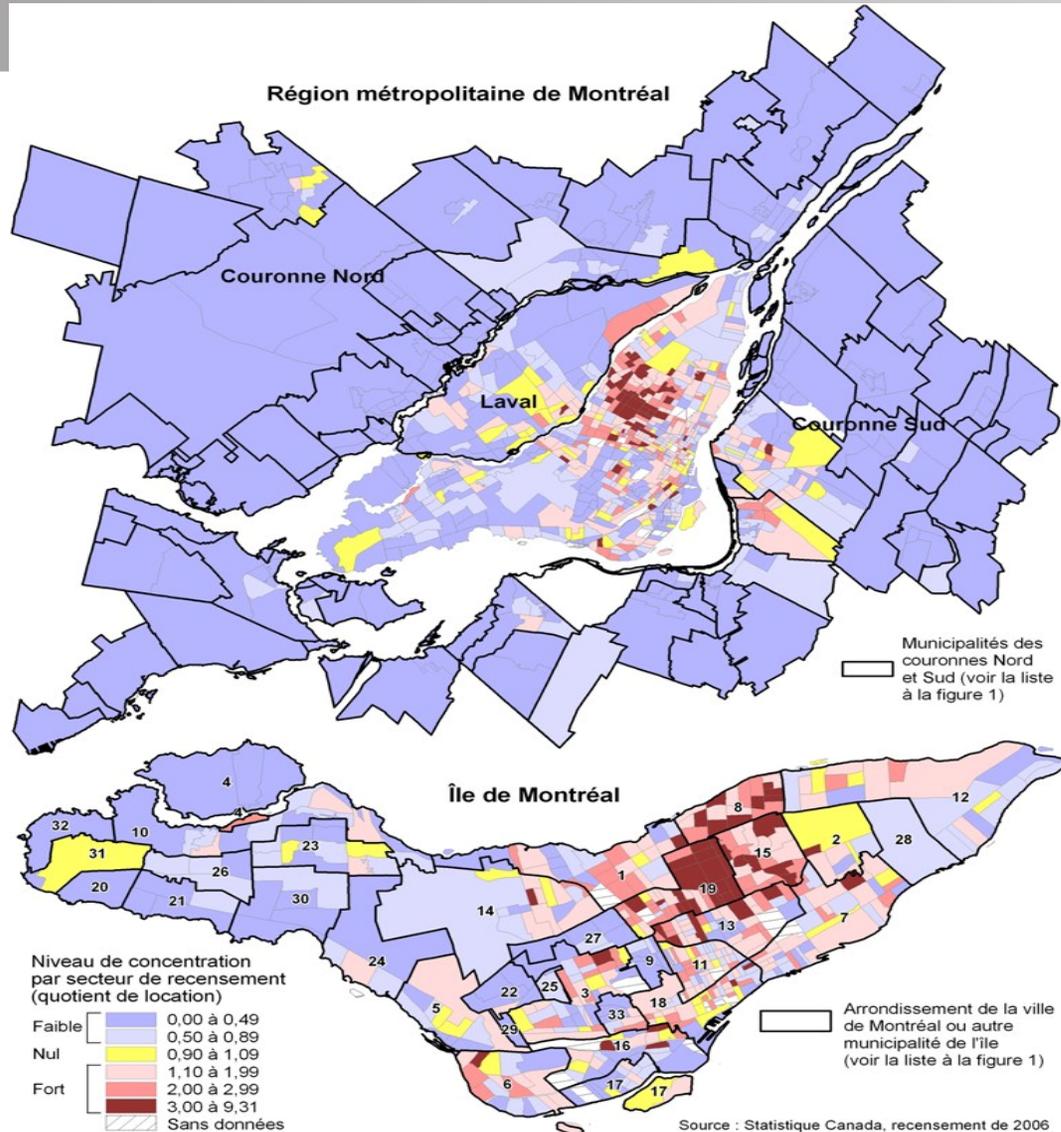
Latin American Community in Quebec: Relevant elements for blood donation



- Well integrated & close to the Francophone majority
- 88% speaks French
- 17% 2nd & 3rd generations
- Active religious practice
- Few internal conflicts
- No particular taboo associated with 'blood'

- Few young Latino-Quebecers enrolled in higher education
- Highly dispersed community in Montreal area

Latin American Community: Highly dispersed community in Montreal area



Spatial concentration of the Latino-American minority in the metropolitan region of Montreal and the Montreal Island, 2006

Apparicio, P., G. Dussault & J. Charbonneau (2008). *Identification des concentrations spatiales de minorités dans la région métropolitaine de Montréal*, Research report for Héma-Québec)

Latin American Community: Blood donation principles & collection systems in the countries of origin



- El Salvador & Mexico :
 - Replacement donation = 80%
- Columbia :
 - Voluntary donation ± 70 %
- Many countries :
 - Mixed system
- Blood drives : mainly in hospital facilities
- Altruism ?
 - = solidarity between family members or within the community
 - Replacement donation = better way to express gratitude

Latin American Community: Motivations & behaviours of blood donors in Quebec



- Quebec system : very different from what they know
- Blood donation : not a pressing matter
 - Blood bank = needs already being met
- Motivations
 - Previous experience in country of origin
 - Religious values
 - Sick loves ones
 - Giving back & express their integration
 - Regenerating their own blood
- Mainly prefer going to : permanent sites, mobile units, blood drives in shopping centres

Latin American Community: A choice between three approaches



Standard individualistic approach : not the most appropriate

- Young people : lower proportion in higher education
- Job profiles + immigration status : lower proportion in large companies

Intermediate approach : pros and cons

- Large community with possibility to target few neighborhoods
- Preference to donate in blood drives located in shopping centres
- But : community used to direct appeals

Collective approach : possible

- Through cooperation with the principal churches
- But : multi-denominational situation = obstacle

Latin American Community: Practical advice



- More active recruitment needed
- Calendar & main travel periods
- Advertising with more members from the community
- Priority to information diffusion
- Managing exclusions : a challenge
- Thinking about new forms of gratitude

The next steps...



- (3) **workshops** with our front line employees;
 - to collect feedback and built some internal case studies;
- **Discussion session** with senior management in order to develop new guidelines
 - to address our employee's concerns and experience
 - to align our approach with our Human Resources Diversity Management Policy;
- New **communication strategy** and message towards our staff;
- Adaptation and implementation of the **training program**;
- **Evaluation of the impact** on our staff, our customer service and our donor satisfaction
 - As well as the potential impact on our donor base and donor loyalty.

A team effort - so many thanks to



Daniel **Vinet**, Director, Donor Recruitment and marketing

Naderge **Ceneston**, Blood drive coordinator

Blood collection and recruitment teams

Research team :

Nathalie **Tran**, INRS Research Chair coordinator & Project coordinator

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Nathalie **Vachon**, Statistical analyst

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