

DONOR CHARTER ACTION PLAN 2021-2023

Implementing the principles of quality service to donors

Quality Service Standards

The IBTS is the national organisation solely responsible for collecting, processing, testing and distributing blood and blood products in Ireland.

It relies completely on the generosity of voluntary non-remunerated donors to provide sufficient donations to ensure a consistent and safe supply of blood and blood components to hospitals.

We want all donors to have a positive experience giving blood and to return repeatedly to our collection clinics. The safety and satisfaction of our donors is at the heart of what we do.

The IBTS Donor Charter sets out the level of service donors can expect when engaging with the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. It is supported by this Donor Charter Action Plan for the same period which identifies improvements and actions to be undertaken to deliver excellence in services to donors.

Action Points

- IBTS will publish and prominently display the Donor Charter on our website www.giveblood.ie
- We will invite and welcome feedback
- We will ensure that donor surveys draw attention to the Donor Charter
- We will monitor and report each year on our service delivery targets in the Operations directorate section of the IBTS Annual Report
- We will communicate the Donor Charter and Donor Charter Action Plan to all staff to bring a shared dedication to the goals and commitments in the Charter and Action Plan
- We will include Donor Charter training as part of new staff COP training

Accessibility / Equality

The IBTS will provide clean and safe public locations for donors to attend to give blood. Our collection venues and buildings will comply with relevant health and safety standards for our donors and staff. IBTS collections clinics are community based with six collection teams travelling throughout the country each week to facilitate blood collection. IBTS also provide three fixed centre blood collection clinics, 2 in Dublin (D'Olier Street and Stillorgan) and 1 in Cork (St. Finbarr's Hospital), and two platelet Apheresis Collection clinics, 1 in Dublin in the National Blood Centre, St James Hospital Dublin, and 1 in St Finbarr's Hospital, Cork.

The IBTS aims to continuously develop greater diversity in its' donor panel within the safety requirements of the blood supply and subject to current eligibility criteria, to better reflect as appropriate the changing profile of the Irish population and patient's needs within the healthcare system

Action Points

- IBTS will ensure our collection clinics are clean, and undergo venue and risk assessment before use, to facilitate a safe blood collection process

- We will provide clean, accessible IBTS offices and laboratories that ensure privacy and comply with occupational and health and safety standards, and as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities or specific needs.
- We will treat all donors/customers equally in accordance with the principles of equality and diversity in line with relevant legislation, and according to current donor eligibility criteria to ensure the safety and sustainability of the blood supply
- We will make equality and diversity awareness training available to staff.

Information & Privacy

The IBTS is committed to proactively providing information to our customers that is clear, accurate and timely. We will avail of Information Technology opportunities and ensure information provided on the our giveblood.ie website meets accessibility standards. We will make relevant information widely available and accessible for people with specific needs. We will continue the drive for simplification of rules and regulations, information leaflets, forms, and procedures where possible. We will keep donor's personal data safe and secure and use it only as appropriate and in compliance with data protection best practice.

Action Points

- IBTS will ensure all eligibility criteria information about who can/cannot donate blood is available on our website www.giveblood.ie,
- We will examine more ways of making this information more accessible and searchable to facilitate donor's checking their own eligibility and self-deferring as appropriate
- Donor Services and Medical referral teams will be available to answer specific donor queries
- Information leaflets about the blood donation process and specific blood donation issues will be available on the website and where possible on clinic. Our information leaflets will comply with plain English standards and best practice.
- Material on our website will conform with web publication accessibility guidelines
- Upcoming clinic details will be readily available on our website for donors
- Existing donors will be notified of upcoming clinics primarily by text message and in addition on some occasions by email and phone
- New Donors (never attended a clinic) or returning donors (over five years since last attendance) are vital and are encouraged to attend where eligible. We will encourage these donors to check their eligibility and in particular to take the 'Can I give blood' online eligibility quiz which covers the main reasons why someone might not be able to donate.
- New donors will receive a pre-screening donation interview with our Clinic support team.
- We will engage with local community contacts and groups to assist us in promoting upcoming clinics
- We will develop and implement targeted awareness and educational information campaigns about blood donation and relevant issues
- We will continue to expand the use of appropriate social media platforms
- We will protect all donor information in accordance with data protection legislation, and promote a culture of awareness and compliance
- We will process Freedom of Information requests in a reasonable timeframe as required under legislation
- We are committed to the security of IBTS data and IT systems
- We will make available Board minutes, strategic plans as appropriate. We will report annually on progress with the Donor Charter Action plan
- We will review regularly and strive to improve our on-going customer communications

Timeliness & Courtesy

IBTS will deliver its services in a courteous manner and in a climate that fosters mutual respect between staff, the organisation and donors. Donor queries will be dealt with sensitivity and in a timely manner. IBTS staff will give their name to donors to ensure ease of on-going communication.

Action Points

- IBTS will treat all donors with courtesy and respect
- We will aim to answer all calls within working hours within 30 seconds, and respond to voicemails within 1 working day
- We will respond to donor communication (written/email etc) within 10 working days
- IBTS staff will be provided with appropriate customer service training for initial phone contact, and also on clinic, putting donors at ease during their blood donation
- IBTS staff will be appropriately trained and experienced at collecting blood safely and professionally. We will ensure a welcoming and positive donation experience that rewards the donor emotionally and motivates them to return to give blood again. We will empower our staff to build donor relations and encourage re-attendance
- We will develop technology solutions to improve the donor experience and reduce the duration of the donation process e.g. digital health & lifestyle questionnaire
- We will strive to deliver a positive and efficient donor experience on clinic, with 95% of donors completing the donation process (from registration to finishing donation) in 1 hour or less
- We are committed to our guiding values within IBTS which are; We improve patient's lives together, We strive for excellence, We love our donors, We lead by example, and We are IBTS

Appeals

In relation to data protection appeals, our data protection privacy policy is outlined on our website in the Privacy section. If a donor has a concern or complaint about the use of their personal data, they can contact the IBTS Data Protection Officer so that we have an opportunity to address their concerns. They also have the right to contact the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (www.dataprotection.ie) to make a complaint.

In relation to Freedom of Information appeals, our FOI policy is outlined on our website in the Media section. If you are not satisfied with a decision on your FOI request, you can appeal the decision by contacting the IBTS FOI Unit requesting an internal review of your request. If you are still not satisfied, you may appeal the decision within six months by writing to the Office of the Information Commissioner.

Consultation & Evaluation, and the importance of Internal customers in a positive donor experience

IBTS will ensure meaningful consultation and engagement with donors in relation to the review, development, and delivery of new services. Staff are also recognised as vital internal customers and will be consulted with and properly supported with regard to service delivery issues.

Action Points

- IBTS will provide easy access to donors who wish to give us feedback, inviting donor comments and suggestions on the standard of our service delivery
- We will undertake regular donor surveys to gather feedback and comments
- All office contact and location details will be available in the 'About Us' section on our website
- We will strive to build a donor focus across the whole organisation, embedding the importance of donor needs in the organisation's goals and processes
- IBTS Senior EMT management will attend clinics several times a year to meet donors
- We will continue to develop our links with local communities and their existing and potential donors
- IBTS Senior EMT management will meet staff several times a year, reporting on service delivery performance, presenting updates on new developments, and obtaining feedback
- IBTS Staff will be fully supported and consulted by internal functions of IBTS (including Practice Development, Collections, Donor Services, HR) and kept informed and communicated with, through appropriate and relevant channels

Improving services Co-ordination and Choice in service delivery

Where possible, IBTS will provide choices in service delivery, using available and emerging technologies to improve access and quality of delivery. We will foster a co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of services to donors.

Action Points

- IBTS will provide a range of contact channels for donors including telephone, written, email, digital social media, and website
- We will make use of new technology to improve the delivery of services and the range of service delivery channels available to donors
- All blood donation clinics will operate using an appointment slots based system. This delivers safety (social distancing in time of Covid-19) but also significant service improvements for donors in particular planning their donation, and reducing the time it takes to go through the full donation process. We will continue to improve this process including introducing an online appointments system to allow regular donors to book their own donation appointment slots without the need to contact IBTS prior to the clinic
- Donors will be texted with appointment reminders prior to clinic
- Donor services staff will be available (Monday – Friday 9-5) to take and reschedule appointments, and answer queries by phone
- We will develop new Web chat donor services contact channels
- We will introduce an online donor portal for donors to view their own profile and donation history
- We will introduce a Donor ID system to increase security and safety of the blood donation process
- We will continue the development of Information and on-clinic technologies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services

Official Languages Equality

IBTS will continue to publish its key Annual report and strategic plan publications in Irish and English. Regarding Medical and clinical matters, all communication must be in English between medical / clinical staff and donors to ensure complete understanding of the full meaning of questions and answers offered, and the donation process. Donors must be proficient in understanding English to donate. These requirements are in order to ensure the safety of the blood donation process and the delivery of safe blood products to patients.

Comments / Complaints Procedures

IBTS want all our donors to have a positive experience donating blood. We will provide a simple to use comments and complaints system regarding the quality of service provided.

Action Points

- Donors will be able to offer feedback and make complaints via a number of methods. The main method is via the Contact us section on our website www.giveblood.ie . Alternative opportunities are at clinic, via phone to Donor Services offices, on our social media platforms, via email at contactus@ibts.ie, or by post to their IBTS office
- Whether a query or complaint, IBTS is committed to providing the highest standards of service to our donors and ensuring donor's comments are heard and considered, and complaints are responded to within 10 working days of a complaint being lodged by you about your donor experience
- Donors will be advised of the outcome of their complaint by a suitably responsible senior staff member.
- We will review the current complaints process with a view to incorporating it into the wider Quality Systems complaints process. We will monitor and report on the number of complaints and complaint trends
- We will continue to raise staff awareness on the cause of complaints and provide training as appropriate