

## Medical Assessment

Donors invited to an assessment with a doctor will be able to discuss all relevant considerations in relation to donation.

If the donor is found to be eligible to donate, the relevant computer changes will be made if necessary.

All donors are required to meet all other IBTS criteria, which ensure the safety of both donors and recipients.

We ask that you notify us of any changes that have occurred since your last donation which may affect your eligibility to donate.

## Additional information

If you require additional information about blood donation as a transgender or non-binary person please contact us on **Freephone: 1800 60 20 20**.

# TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY DONORS

## INFORMATION LEAFLET



### IRISH BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

National Blood Centre,  
James's Street, Dublin D08 NH5R

### MUNSTER REGIONAL TRANSFUSION CENTRE

St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork T12 Y319

[www.giveblood.ie](http://www.giveblood.ie)

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## **Giving blood**

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) welcomes potential donors, including transgender and non-binary donors. All donors are entitled to self-identify their gender as per the Gender Recognition Act 2015. However, there are a number of considerations in relation to these donors which may impact on their eligibility to donate. This leaflet outlines the criteria that need to be considered.

### **Transgender donors**

Any donor who identifies themselves as transgender should not donate until their eligibility to donate has been assessed by a doctor. This assessment can be scheduled by calling Freephone 1800 60 20 20 or by talking to one of the staff on clinic who will pass on your queries to the relevant medical staff.

### **Non-binary donors**

As per the Gender Recognition Act 2015, the IBTS will accept the gender the donor identifies as, however, we are limited by current restrictions of our computer system, which can only record the binary response of male or female as a gender. We are working with our international colleagues to include non-binary options into the gender field of our IT system. In the interim a binary option of male or female will need to be selected in order to donate. Donors opting to donate under their assigned birth gender will be able to donate on the day if eligible.

### **Existing donors**

An existing transgender donor will need to be assessed by a doctor to ascertain their eligibility to continue donating blood or blood components. An appointment can be scheduled by calling Freephone 1800 60 20 20 or by talking to one of the staff on clinic, who will pass on your queries to the relevant medical staff.

### **Haemoglobin**

The required haemoglobin range is that of the donor's gender identity/expression. In the case of a change in gender identity/expression to transgender male, the

donor's haemoglobin would have to reach the higher male requirement 13.5 -17.9 g/dl and the following range would apply in the case of a transgender female 12.5-16.4 g/dl.

Donors may not be eligible to donate if their haemoglobin is outside the range for donation of their gender identity/expression i.e. too high or too low. In these cases it will not be possible to take a unit of blood from the donor. The hormones in your blood stream may affect the haemoglobin ranges; therefore we need to know if you are on hormone replacement therapy (HRT). You will need to be on a stable dose of HRT for 12 months prior to starting donating.

If the donor's haemoglobin is within the range for donating, as specified for their gender identity/expression, then a donation will be taken. If a donor is anaemic according to their assigned birth gender, this may not be identified and an underlying condition may remain undetected. This may have implications for the health of the donor. If you have any concerns in relation to your haemoglobin please call the Freephone number or talk to one of the staff on the clinic.

### **Confidentiality**

The IBTS takes confidentiality of data seriously and we restrict access to personal sensitive data to a limited number of staff on a need to know basis. We will never share your data with external or third parties without your explicit consent.

### **Why can I not donate straight away?**

There are a number of considerations that need to be reviewed before accepting a donation from a transgender donor; some of these considerations are listed below. In order to ensure the continued safety of our donors and recipients we may need to carry out a one to one interview to assess a transgender or non-binary person's eligibility to donate.

## **Areas for consideration**

### **Pregnancy**

Donors who have ever been pregnant may carry antibodies in their blood. There are cases where receiving a unit of blood with these antibodies could be an issue for babies still in the womb or new-born infants. It is the IBTS policy to use blood/blood components from cis-male donors only in these situations.

### **Blood volume**

A total blood volume (TBV) is a calculation used to assess a donor's eligibility to donate. It is measured based on a donor's height, weight and gender. In line with European guidelines, all donors require a blood volume of at least 3.5 litres to donate safely. The IBTS will calculate the TBV of all transgender donors under the age of 26. Changes that occur when taking hormones (HRT) will affect an individual's muscle and fat mass which could affect their TBV.

### **Sexual activity**

The IBTS has introduced an individual donor risk assessment for all donors regardless of gender and sexual orientation.

All donors will be asked if they have had a new sexual partner or more than one sexual partner in the last 4 months. If yes they will be deferred if they have had anal sex during the 4 month period with any of their sexual partners. If they have not had anal sex, they will be eligible to donate.

### **What type of donation will I be eligible to give?**

A transgender donor will be eligible to give a whole blood donation. They will not be eligible to donate platelets by apheresis because of the aspects relating to blood volume discussed above.