IBTS Annual report – over 11,500 new donors gave blood in 2024 against a backdrop of increased demand for blood and blood products

IBTS published its 2024 Annual Report today (Wednesday 24th September). IBTS Chief Executive Orla O’Brien welcomed the 11,500 new donors who gave blood for the first time in 2024. “The IBTS issued 128,471 red cell units in 2024 which is an increase of 2.9% on the previous year. The increase in demand has not been without its challenges and while the new donors are extremely welcome and needed, we are immensely grateful for those who make the commitment to become regular donors.”

A significant milestone was achieved with the re-introduction of Irish plasma for therapeutic use recovered from whole blood donation. “It’s been over 20 years since this product made from Irish plasma was available to Irish patients and IBTS is proud to have introduced this positive change” she said.

IBTS Medical & Scientific Director Dr Andy Godfrey noted that ongoing review of the efficacy of Individual Donor Risk Assessment with an IDRA Safety Monitoring Group (ISMG) has shown that the introduction of this approach to donor selection has been of massive benefit to our donor base and to the organisation.

“We continue to monitor our donor selection criteria, with a particular focus on novel and emerging infectious diseases through our Infection Steering Group (ISG).

“As demand for rare blood increases, in particular the RhD type Ro, there is a need to increase the ethnic diversity of our donor base, as Ro is a rare blood group phenotype in the current Irish donor population. The introduction of malarial antibody testing for donors of African heritage in 2023 has seen us welcome more than 300 new donors of African heritage over the past 18 months. Our focus is on expanding and diversifying our donor base, and while we undertake this we will continue to work with our clinical colleagues and external blood establishment colleagues to manage the supply.” said Dr Godfrey.

**ENDS**

**Note to editor**

**IBTS 2024 statistics at a glance**

87,619 donors gave 128,471 donations

44.6% were female 55.4% male

23,471 units of platelets were issued which is an increase of 3.6% on the previous year

2,266 new volunteers gave blood samples to join the bone marrow registry which will be added to the current registry of over 30,000 potential donors