**IBTS issues an urgent appeal for blood donations as stocks are critically low**

The IBTS is asking for immediate public and donor support to help recover the National blood supply as supply in some groups has frequently fallen to just 3 days in recent weeks. The IBTS normally tries to have 7 days stock at all times.

“Hospitals have been experiencing extreme pressures recently and there has been a sustained high demand for blood. The recent high level of respiratory illness in the community has also impacted the collection of blood and as a result we are running critically low across all blood groups. In order to avoid putting further pressure on our hospital system, we need as many donors as possible to attend donation clinics over the coming days,’’ said Paul McKinney, Director of Donor Services and Logistics

”If you receive a text message from us, please respond to the number provided and make an appointment, RhD negative donors can attend any clinic and they will be accommodated.

“Support from our donors has as usual been superb over the last few challenging months and we are very grateful for that. We constantly need new donors and anybody interested in becoming a new donor should register their interest on our website (www.giveblood.ie) where you will also find all clinic locations / opening hours and all frequently asked questions. In advance of the new Public Holiday we are also running additional clinics on Sunday 29th of January,” he added.

The IBTS continues to adhere to public health guidelines to ensure the safety of its donors.

Additional clinics on Sunday 29th January are as follows:

**Kilkenny – O’Loughlin Gaels GAA Club**

**Ennis – West County Hotel**

**Clondalkin – Green Isle Hotel**

For further information on donation please go to www.giveblood.ie.

**ENDS**

**Note to editor**

Only 3% of the population are blood donors and approximately 8% of these donors are O negative. However, as this blood can be transfused to patients of all groups, issues of this blood group to hospitals frequently hits 15% thus requiring more frequent calls on donors of this group. The IBTS needs to collect 3,000 units of blood every week to maintain the national blood supply.