

IBTS issues urgent appeal for 2,000 additional blood donations over the next 4 weeks

The IBTS is today (Wednesday 21st May) seeking an additional 2,000 blood donations over the next 4 weeks to maintain the national blood supply as some blood groups have fallen to under 3 days of stock. “The IBTS aims to have 7 days’ supply at all times, however, current stock levels including those for O negative and B negative are causing concern at just 3 days’ supply, and O positive which relates to nearly half the total population is at just over 2.5 days”, said Paul McKinney, Director of Donor Services and Logistics.

“A stock management alert letter was issued to all hospitals on 13th May, restricting issues and hospitals have been asked to reduce their stock holding. This enables the IBTS to manage the limited blood supply available more effectively across the health service. If the IBTS must issue an ‘amber alert letter’ which is the next escalation level of the blood shortage plan, it would have an immediate implication for hospitals and for elective surgical procedures requiring blood support.

“Hospital demand for blood has been consistently high, particularly since the Easter and May Bank holidays. The continued good weather has also impacted clinic attendances. We need to boost our collections by 500 donations per week across all blood groups to meet the consistently high demand. In addition, the start of the summer holiday travel period has also had an impact on donor availability.

”We are asking regular donors to make an extra effort to attend their nearest clinic (appointments available online), especially in Dublin and Cork where we have clinic availability every week. For the longer term, we would also urge donors to please consider giving blood if they are eligible before they go on holidays this summer.

“New donors are especially welcome, and we would encourage anybody interested in giving blood to visit <https://www.giveblood.ie/become-a-donor/> to check their eligibility before coming to a clinic and call us on 1800 731137 to make an appointment. We would particularly encourage new donors of African heritage to join the National blood donor panel to help us diversify the donor base and get better blood type matches for patients.”