**IBTS makes urgent appeal as blood supply falls to just 3 days**

***Additional 2,000 donations needed in June***

The IBTS are today (Monday) seeking the public’s support to help the national blood supply as most blood groups have fallen to just 3 days in recent weeks. The IBTS aims to have 7 days stock at all times. “The target is to get an additional 2,000 donations over the next 5 weeks so we can significantly increase our blood supply levels,” said Paul McKinney, Director of Donor Services and Logistics.

”There has been a consistently strong hospital demand for blood and we need to boost our collections by nearly 400 donations per week to meet it. The start of summer travel has also had an impact on donor availability.’’ said IBTS Director of Donor Services and Logistics, Paul McKinney.

”We are asking regular donors who are texted over the next few weeks to make an extra effort to attend their nearest clinic. They are vital to addressing the current increased demand from hospitals. For the longer term, we also urge donors to consider giving blood if they are eligible before they go on holidays this summer.’’

New donors have also fallen significantly since the pandemic therefore anybody interested in giving blood should visit <https://www.giveblood.ie/become-a-donor/> to check their eligibility before coming to a clinic or alternatively, call us to make an appointment on 1800 731137.

‘’A ‘pre-amber alert letter’ was issued to all hospitals on the 25th May, restricting issues of blood 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 has to 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’’ he added.

ENDS

For further information email contactus@ibts.ie

**Notes to editor**

Only 3% of the eligible population are blood donors but it is estimated 1 in 4 people will need a blood transfusion at some point in their lives

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 over 3,000 units of blood every week to maintain the national blood supply

Current demand for blood from the hospitals is running at +5.8% versus 2022 and is likely to further increase over the Summer.