



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE**

1 May 2009

BLOODBANK@HSA URGES CONTINUED BLOOD DONATIONS
Enhanced measures taken to further safeguard blood and donor safety

The Bloodbank@HSA is urging continued blood donations from donors to help maintain a sufficient national blood stock for daily transfusion needs and emergencies. While there is still adequate blood supply to meet the current daily needs, we are concerned that donor attendance may fall.

2 Since 28 April 2009, the Bloodbank@HSA has stepped-up the longstanding stringent screening of blood donors to safeguard our national blood supply from the Influenza A (H1N1) virus and to minimise donors' risk of exposure. Donors can be assured that the Bloodbank@HSA has and will continue to take all necessary measures in accordance with the Alert levels to ensure the safety of blood donors.

3 Deferral measures are in place for donors who may have been exposed to the Influenza A (H1N1) virus. This is on top of current screening procedures which already require donors to be in good health when donating blood.

4 We have also, since 28 April 2009, implemented the following risk containment and reduction measures to ensure that risks are kept to a minimum:

- Temperature monitoring of all staff is conducted twice a day, and temperature monitoring of all potential donors at screening stations set up outside the blood donation areas is also conducted. Those who are unwell or have temperature above 37.5°C will not be allowed to enter the blood donation areas in the Bloodbank@HSA or at blood mobiles.
- Staff triaging potential donors are required to wear masks and gloves. Donors and staff at the Bloodbank@HSA and blood mobiles are provided with antiseptic hand rubs to clean their hands at screening stations.
- High level of personal hygiene is practised to ensure blood and donor safety. Increased hand washing stations and alcohol hand rubs are available at all stations.
- Blood donation areas at the Bloodbank@HSA and blood mobiles are cleaned and disinfected regularly.

Following the change of alert level to "Orange" on 30 April 2009, all blood centre staff, blood donors and their family members/friends will also be required to wear masks with immediate effect.

5 We encourage our blood donors to practise all precautions as advised by the Ministry of Health. If they are fit and healthy and do not fall into any risk category of exposure to the Influenza A (H1N1) virus, we strongly urge them to come forward to donate blood regularly.

6 Members of the public donate blood at the Bloodbank@HSA located at 11 Outram Road [opposite Outram Park MRT Station]. The opening hours are as follows:

Tuesdays to Thursdays	9.00am to 6.30pm
Fridays	9.00am to 8.00pm
Saturdays	9.00am to 4.30pm
Sundays	9.00am to 2.00pm
Closed on Mondays and public holidays	

7 Members of the public can also donate blood at our community mobiles. Details of the community mobiles are available online at www.donorweb.org. Those who wish to donate can call the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) at 62200183 for more details. SRC will also be initiating SMS recalls of blood-type specific donors to come forward to donate blood during this time to ensure that all blood types are kept at optimal stock level. As blood can only be kept for a limited period of time, we seek the support of blood donors to help us ensure a constant supply of blood.

8 The Bloodbank@HSA will continue to monitor and review our screening criteria based on the best available information to ensure the safety of our national blood supply and to also ensure that our blood donors are not unnecessarily deferred.

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▪ About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services, Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. It operates the national blood bank, Bloodbank@HSA, securing the nation's blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit www.hsa.gov.sg

▪ About HSA's Blood Services Group

The Blood Services Group (BSG) of HSA, as the national blood service, secures the nation's blood supply by ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply and providing specialist transfusion medicine services.

BSG operates the Bloodbank@HSA, and it is responsible for collecting, processing, testing and distributing blood and blood products to all hospitals in Singapore, both public and private.

As the national blood service, it provides specialised services in transfusion sciences such as immunohaematology and tissue typing. Its transfusion medicine specialists also provide professional advice and consultations to clinicians in Singapore and the region, so as to promote the best practices in clinical transfusion medicine and to ensure that every blood donation is optimally and safely used.

Bloodbank@HSA is located at the HSA Building at 11 Outram Road, Singapore 169078 (directly opposite the Outram Park MRT Station). Blood donors are welcome to call the Bloodbank@HSA at Tel: 6213 0626.