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# news release

EMBARGO UNTIL 00.01AM  
Sunday 20 September 2009

## Glasgow Mum & Baby Launch Campaign for More Platelet Donors in Scotland

### CONTACTS:

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Photocall: Thursday 17 September 2009, 3:30pm, Blood Donor Centre, 8 Nelson  
Mandela Place, GLASGOW.  
*23 year old Glasgow mum Claire Leishman, 30 year old dad Stephen  
McRobbie, with their 18 month old son Ciaran.*

### BODY TEXT:

The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) are launching a campaign to recruit more platelet donors in Scotland. Platelets are a special component of blood that helps blood clot and are commonly required to treat many patient groups, including cancer patients, leukaemia patients, and premature babies. Currently, 1,550 donors give platelets in Blood Donor Centres across the country. SNBTS would like to increase this number to 2,020, an increase of 470 new platelet donors, before the end of 2009.

Moira Eadie, Deputy Donor Services Manager, SNBTS commented, "Many people know about the need for blood and blood donors. However, if you live near one of our blood donor centres in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow or Inverness, it may also be possible for you to give platelets. Donating platelets takes 90 minutes, and we ask all platelet donors to come along once every four weeks. The platelet process puts red cells back into the donor's body, which is why only four weeks is left in between donations, rather than the twelve weeks required for whole blood donations."

Glasgow parents Claire Leishman (23) and her partner Steven McRobbie (30) are eternally grateful to these platelet donors for helping to save the life of their 18 month old son, Ciaran. Ciaran was born in the Queen Mothers Hospital on 20 March 2008 and transferred to Yorkhill when he was only two days old. He was born with the condition Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia. He had the first of several corrective operations at only 19 days old. His initial chances of survival were given at only 5%.

Says Claire, "When Ciaran was born, his bowel, liver and stomach was up in his chest through a hole in his diaphragm. His liver was also above his diaphragm, and he had very little lung capacity. He was immediately placed on ventilation. He was then treated with an ECMO machine for nine days, and that increased his chances of survival to 50%. The ECMO machine needs platelets to work, and at the time I did not even know what platelets were. As a result of this treatment, and after several more operations, we were able to bring Ciaran home at 11



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



National Director Keith Thompson

weeks old. His lung is now functioning normally for the time being, and he is a beautiful thriving little boy who is the light of our lives.”

“Ciaran needed several doses of platelets and several whole blood transfusions for his life saving treatment. I had never heard of platelets before this happened to my family, and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to every platelet donor in Scotland. I am now planning to become a platelet donor myself, and I’d like to encourage many others to do so!”

To find out about giving platelets, please call 0845 90 90 999 or visit [www.scotblood.co.uk](http://www.scotblood.co.uk)

### Notes to Editors:

- Platelets are a component of blood essential to stop bruising and bleeding.
- Many patients rely on platelets to survive, including cancer and leukaemia patients, premature babies and emergency admissions.
- Platelets have the shortest shelf life of all blood components, lasting only 5 days.
- You can give platelets in our Blood Donor Centres in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness. The process is very similar to giving blood, but we use specialist equipment called a cell separator machine.
- The platelet process puts red cells back into the donor’s body, which is why only four weeks is left in between donations, rather than the twelve weeks required for whole blood donations.
- SNBTS ask platelet donors to give once a month using an appointments system.
- Platelet donors are normally:
  - Existing blood donors under 60 years of age
  - Blood group O or A. SNBTS are now also recruiting platelet donors with Group B.
  - Able to donate in your local donor centre every 4 to six weeks
  - SNBTS have a specialist platelet team, to help find out if you will be able to donate platelets.
- SNBTS aim to hold 100 Adult Dose Equivalent (ADE’s) of platelets in stock at all times
- To manufacture one Adult Dose Equivalent from whole blood requires the platelet component from four whole blood donations. However, one platelet donation will manufacture enough platelets for three Adult Dose Equivalent’s, helping to save many more lives
- There are currently 1,550 active platelet donors in Scotland. An active platelet donor is defined as a donor who has given at least one in the past 3 months (figures taken from 31 March 2009 – source SNBTS). The regional breakdown of donors is as follows:

Region	Number of Current Donors	Target Number of Donors Dec 09	New Donors Required
Aberdeen	137	170	33
Dundee	189	230	41
Edinburgh	254	320	66
Glasgow	703	870	167
Inverness	267	330	63
<b>SNBTS</b>	<b>1550</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>470</b>

- The campaign for new platelet donors will feature posters, leaflets, and dedicated recruiters in Blood Donor Centres across Scotland. The campaign starts on Monday 21 September 2009.
- Call **0845 90 90 999**, text **blood** to **61611** or visit [www.scotblood.co.uk](http://www.scotblood.co.uk) to find out more about giving platelets. Thank you!

**ENDS.**