



news release

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Appeal for Blood Donor 24 Participants as the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service Call for More O Negative Blood

CONTACTS:

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Filming Ops: Alan Brodie, Fast Response member who responded last week within 1 hour of the call, Edinburgh based, available at any time

BODY TEXT:

The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) is appealing for more people in Scotland to come forward and join Blood Donor 24, following an emergency call out for O negative blood.

Dr Moira Carter, National Donor Services Manager, SNBTS explains: "Blood Donor 24 is a unique team of blood donors in Edinburgh and Glasgow, which was established in September 2006. Members must agree to give blood within 24 hours when patients need it most. There are now 10,000 members across Edinburgh & Glasgow, and we are hugely grateful to them, but we urgently need more.

Every single day SNBTS must collect 1,000 units of blood to support patients in hospitals. On occasion certain blood groups are required urgently. This is presently the case with O negative blood. Over the summer months donations can drop by up to 20%, as many donors go on holiday or are busy with different activities. Over the past 2 weeks, supplies of O negative blood have dropped to below the optimum 6 day level. SNBTS had to phone almost 500 Blood Donor 24 members with O negative blood, and ask them to come in and give blood within 24 hours which allowed us to boost stocks of this blood type. However, we urgently need more members. To join Blood Donor 24, the most uniquely important club in Scotland, please come forward now."

To join the Blood Donor 24 Team, you should come in to the Blood Donor Centre in Edinburgh or Glasgow and give blood as soon as possible. Afterwards, you will be asked to continue to donate three times a year as you normally would, but, should we urgently need your blood group, SNBTS will phone you and ask you to come in within 24 hours."

Alan Brodie, from Edinburgh, was the first donor to respond to the call last week. He gave blood within an hour of receiving the emergency call. Alan says, "This was my first Fast Response donation, and it really made me feel part of the emergency services. I've given 9 donations now, and really enjoy giving blood. I'd urge everyone to join up as quick as you can!"



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

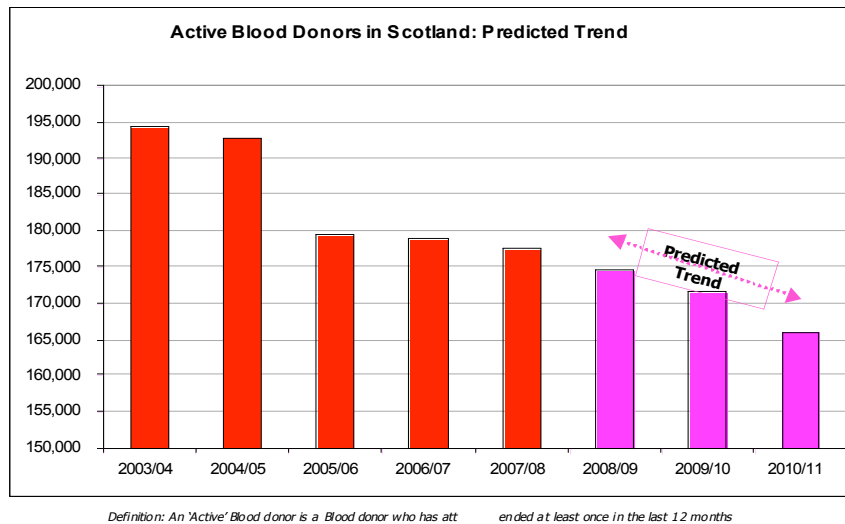


National Director Keith Thompson

Help us show patients in Scotland they are not fighting alone. To register as a blood donor or to find out where your nearest donation session is, call 0845 90 90 999, text 'blood' to 61611, or visit www.scotblood.co.uk.

Notes to Editor:

- In 2007, Blood donor 24 was initiated 13 times.
- On 1 August 2008, Blood donor 24 was initiated for O Negative blood.
- Scotland's donor base of active blood donors has declined by 11% since 2003 to 175k donors. Unless we act now this is predicted to fall further to 166k by 2011. An active blood donor is a blood donor who has attended at least once in the last 12 months.



- O negative blood is the only blood group that can be safely transfused to any recipient. This puts extra pressure on O negative blood donors, as they must sustain A&E wards throughout Scotland.
- You can give blood every twelve weeks. The average number of donations given per donor per annum is currently 1.67 (this is known as donation frequency).
- Donors are asked to give blood three times per year. 85% of donors did not give blood three times in 2007.
- Scotland needs to expand the donor base to 197,000 active donors in 2008/09 – the highest new donor target ever.
- SNBTS provides blood transfusions for 100,000 patients each year
- SNBTS serves over 40 blood banks across Scotland
- A premature baby may require up to 50 transfusions – just three teaspoons of blood can save the life of a premature baby. Premature babies are also commonly transfused with platelets, the component of blood to help blood clot and prevent bleeding. Platelets last only five days. This means our platelet supply must be constantly replenished over the summer period.
- Edinburgh Blood Donor Centre, 41 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, open 6 days a week
- Glasgow Blood Donor Centre, 8 Nelson Mandela Place, Glasgow, open 6 days a week
- Call **0845 90 90 999**, text **blood** to **61611** or visit www.scotblood.co.uk to register as a blood donor. Thank you!

ENDS.