

World Blood Donor Day 2016

The theme of this year's campaign is "Blood connects us all". It focuses on thanking blood donors and highlights the dimension of "sharing" and "connection" between blood donors and patients. In addition, we have adopted the slogan, "Share life, give blood", to draw attention to the roles that voluntary donation systems play in encouraging people to care for one another and promote community cohesion.

The campaign aims to highlight stories of people whose lives have been saved through blood donation, as a way of motivating regular blood donors to continue giving blood, and to motivate people in good health who have never given blood to begin doing so, particularly young people.

Activities may include commemorative events, meetings, publication of relevant stories, scientific conferences, publication of articles in national, regional and international scientific journals, and other activities that would help in promoting the theme of this year's World Blood Donor Day.

Background information

Every year, on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day. The event serves to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood and to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure the quality, safety and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.

Transfusion of blood and blood products helps save millions of lives every year. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with higher quality of life, and supports complex medical and surgical procedures. It also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care and during man-made and natural disasters.

However, in many countries, demand exceeds supply, and blood services face the challenge of making sufficient blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety. An adequate supply can only be assured through regular donations by voluntary, unpaid blood donors. WHO's goal is for all countries to obtain all their blood supplies from voluntary, unpaid donors by 2020.

Today, only 62 countries get close to 100% of their national blood supplies from voluntary unpaid blood donations, with 40 countries still dependent on family donors and even paid donors.

The objectives of this year's campaign are to:

- thank blood donors for their life-saving gift of blood and highlight the theme of blood connecting us all
- create wider public awareness of the need for regular, unpaid blood donation, and inspire those who have not yet donated blood to start donating, particularly young people in good health
- promote and highlight the need to share life by donating blood
- focus attention on blood services as a community service, and the importance of community participation for a sufficient, safe and sustainable blood supply
- persuade ministries of health to show their appreciation to regular voluntary unpaid donors and commit to self-sufficiency in safe blood and blood products based on 100% voluntary, unpaid donations

Host for World Blood Donor Day events

The host country for World Blood Donor Day 2016 is the Netherlands through Sanquin, the national blood supply organization. The global event will be held in Amsterdam on 14 June 2016.

Campaign web site:

<http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day/2016/event/en/>