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PRESS RELEASE**

# **World Blood Donor Day** June 14 “Blood, a gift for life.” Thank You

## **CELEBRATING WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY IN SINGAPORE**

**Singapore, 14 June 2004** - The Singapore Red Cross and the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) celebrate the *world's first* World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) today to thank each and every blood donor in Singapore.

Over 1,000 red balloons symbolising “Gift of Life” decorate the Bloodbank@HSA on WBDD. A special programme to commemorate the inauguration of WBDD has also been lined up for blood donors and recipients in Singapore.

The theme of this year’s WBDD is “Blood, a gift for life. Thank you”. To mark this special day, the programme will begin with blood donors and bloodmobile organisers pledging their commitment by signing on “Gift of Life” balloons adorning the walkway to the “Wall of Thanks”.

The Guest-of-Honour, Professor Satku K, Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health will unveil the “Wall of Thanks”, to be witnessed by blood donors, bloodmobile organisers and blood recipients. The “Wall of Thanks” is a collage of postcards specially signed and written by hospital patients and blood recipients who have benefited from the blood given by our donors.

Every second, someone in the world needs blood. Millions of people owe their lives to people they will never meet – people who donate their blood freely and without any reward. Yet, in many countries, many others die every day because they do not have access to safe blood when they need it.

Professor Satku K, Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health, says “The availability of safe blood for all patients who require transfusion depends on the extraordinary generosity of individuals who donate it. Today, on this inaugural World Blood Donor Day, we recognise and honour these individuals. I would also like to urge more Singaporeans to come forward and join their ranks.”

Blood donors are the silent heroes of our community, dedicating their time and resources to give the most precious gift-of-life - BLOOD. WBDD is dedicated to celebrate and thank these individuals who voluntarily donate their blood without any reward, except the knowledge that they have helped to save lives. This is the first time that WBDD is celebrated globally. A special significance is attached to this day as it is also the birthday of Dr Karl Landsteiner who discovered the ABO blood group system, a discovery that paved the way for safe blood transfusion and earned Dr Landsteiner the Nobel prize in medicine.

Blood recipient, Mr C H Ting, a liver transplant patient who received over 80 packets of blood ten years ago to save his life, is the volunteer Master of Ceremony for this event. As a survivor of the deadly disease, he has become an advocator of blood donation. Whilst he volunteers with the Singapore Red Cross to advocate the importance of blood donation at various bloodmobiles organised by the Singapore Red Cross, he has also organised a blood donation drive with the support of his neighbours at the Sultan Mosque.

Today's WBDD celebrations will also include over 100 officers from SMRT Corporation Limited who will pledge and donate blood at the Bloodbank@HSA. One of SMRT officers, whose birthday falls on WBDD, will donate blood as his gift to those in need, to celebrate his birthday in a meaningful way. For this happy occasion, his colleagues have planned for a birthday cake, to be wheeled into the blood donation room, to celebrate his birthday.

The celebration of WBDD will continue till the end of the month with a Champion Blood Donor Recognition Ceremony on 27 June 04 at the Furama Hotel. Blood donors who have contributed their 75<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup> and 125<sup>th</sup> unit of blood will receive the Ruby, Gold and Diamond Awards, respectively. This year, the Ceremony will also launch the first Champion of Champion Award to recognise a champion donor who has donated his 150<sup>th</sup> unit of blood.

Associate Professor Phua Kai Hong, Vice Chairman, Singapore Red Cross, says "World Blood Donor Day is indeed a special day to recognise the contribution of blood donors worldwide. The Singapore Red Cross and the thousands of recipients that receive your Gift of Life would like to extend a big thank you for your altruism. You are the unsung heroes that WBDD is dedicated to celebrate and thank."

For more information on the National Blood Programme, the public can contact the Singapore Red Cross at 6 220-0183 or log on to [www.redcross.org.sg](http://www.redcross.org.sg) for information on the available bloodmobiles in the community.

**SINGAPORE RED CROSS & HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY**  
**14 JUNE 2004**

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### **NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

#### **A About the Singapore Red Cross**

The Singapore Red Cross is part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which comprises 178 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Movement's work is based on the seven fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

For more information on the campaign or on the list of bloodmobiles in the community, log on to the Singapore Red Cross' website at [www.redcross.org.sg](http://www.redcross.org.sg)

## **B About the Health Sciences Authority**

At the Health Sciences Authority [HSA], we apply medical, pharmaceutical and specialised scientific expertise to safeguard public health and safety in Singapore. As one multidisciplinary agency, we serve as the national regulator of all therapeutic products by providing a seamless yet rigorous regulatory process to the healthcare and biomedical sciences industries. We also operate the national blood bank, Bloodbank@HSA, protecting the integrity of the nation's blood supply. As the national reference agency, we exploit specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in order to serve the administration of justice and enhance safety in our community. For more details, visit [www.hsa.gov.sg](http://www.hsa.gov.sg).

## **C About the Bloodbank@HSA**

The Bloodbank@HSA is managed by the HSA's Centre for Transfusion Medicine (CTM).

At CTM, we are responsible for the national blood supply. We collect, process and distribute blood and blood components to all public and private hospitals in Singapore. As the national blood service, we provide specialised services in transfusion sciences such as immunohaematology and tissue typing. Our 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.

We run and manage the Bloodbank@HSA, which 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: 6223.5640 or the Singapore Red Cross Society at 6220.0183 for further queries. Blood donations can be made at the Bloodbank@HSA at the following opening hours:

Monday to Thursday	9 am - 6 pm
Friday	9 am - 8 pm
Saturday	9 am - 2 pm
Sunday	9 am - 2 pm

**For more details, visit [www.hsa.gov.sg](http://www.hsa.gov.sg), select the "CTM" button.**