



Media Release
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Saluting Champion Blood Donors For Their Gift of Life

Singapore, 1 July 2006 – Singapore pays tribute to some 260 champion blood donors today for their gift of life.

Jointly organised by the Singapore Red Cross and the Centre for Transfusion Medicine of the Health Sciences Authority, the annual Champion Blood Donors Recognition Ceremony applauds the commitment of regular blood donors, as well as the efforts put in by the grassroots communities and corporate companies in supporting the cause.

In his opening address, Lt. Gen. Winston Choo, retd, commended the recipients of the various awards for their contribution in helping to save lives. *“Blood is an extraordinary gift that one in need can only receive through the selfless act of another human being. It is needed not only to save lives in times of emergencies, but also to sustain the lives of patients who require regular blood transfusions at our hospitals. To you our donors, we salute you for your commitment to saving lives through the donation of your blood.”*

On top of the 260 champion blood donors, eight special awards are also presented to champions of the champions - individuals who had shown exceptional commitment; having made their 150th blood donation in 2005.

“It started in 1965 when a comrade of mine was shot in the jungle in Kota Tinggi. He bled profusely and needed blood urgently. I was one of the soldiers who donated blood to help him. I learnt the importance of blood donation after this incident. Blood is precious and blood donation is not painful and there's nothing to be afraid of,” recalled Mr Haris Bin Hassan, one of the eight recipients for the champions of champions award.

In addition, ten blood mobile organisers also received their award from the Guest-of-Honour, Mr Khaw Boon Wan, Minister for Health. These grassroots communities and corporate companies supported by organising mobile blood donation drives on a regular basis and collected an average of 150 units of blood per session. Each of the ten award recipients in this category collected at least 500 units of blood in year 2005.

A video presentation at the ceremony showcased the remarkable contributions by these champion blood donors over the years. Another tribute highlight included a specially composed song dedicated to blood donors for the first time. Titled ‘Spirit of the Loved’, the lyrics of the song depicted a story about how true heroes emerge and the difference they made to others’ lives. It was composed and sung by Mr Edmund Tan Yuan Jie, a member of the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Song Composing Club,

“When I was composing the song, I thought of the recipients being grateful to the blood donors and would like to thank them from the bottom of their heart,” remarked 18 year-old Edmund.

Through this ceremony, the Singapore Red Cross and the Centre for Transfusion Medicine hope to encourage more Singaporeans to come forward and donate blood on a regular basis to meet the daily blood transfusion needs of all patients in the hospitals. As blood can only be stored for a limited period of time before use, a regular and consistent blood supply is needed to ensure that it will always be available whenever and wherever it is needed.

SINGAPORE RED CROSS & HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
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▪ **About the Singapore Red Cross**

As the National Blood Donor Recruiter, the Singapore Red Cross is part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which comprises 181 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 National Blood Programme, log on to the Singapore Red Cross' website at www.redcross.org.sg.

▪ **About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)**

At 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

▪ **About the Bloodbank@HSA**

The Bloodbank@HSA is managed by HSA's Centre for Transfusion Medicine (CTM). At CTM, we are 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, 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.

For more details, visit www.hsa.gov.sg, select the “CTM” button.