

# Health Services Group

• CENTRE FOR TRANSFUSION MEDICINE

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We are the national blood service,  
ensuring a safe and adequate blood  
supply and providing specialist  
transfusion medicine services.



Fuelling the Distance





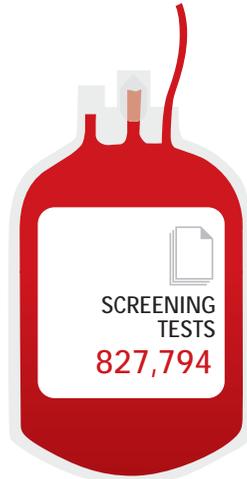
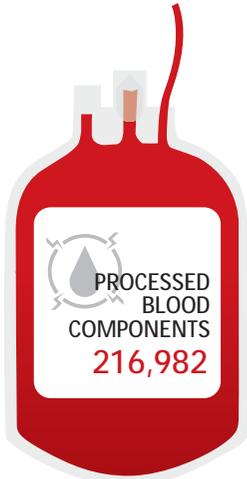
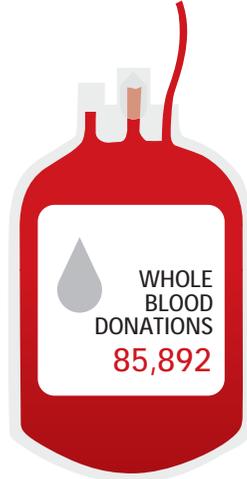
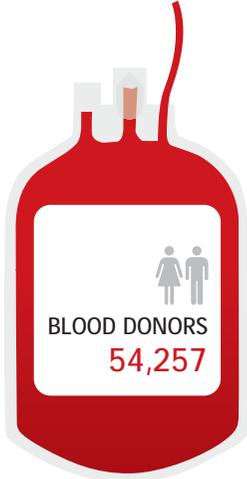
To:



**Front [Left to Right] :**  
Dr Marieta Chan  
Dr Tan Hwee Huang  
Ms Sally Lam

**Back [Left to Right] :**  
Ms Leou Kwee Kim  
Ms Selvi Govindaraju  
Ng Kok Quan  
Ms Toh Ching Lian  
Ms Koh Geok Tin

**Absent :**  
Dr Mickey Koh





## Driving New Standards in Professional Excellence

*O*ur emphasis in maintaining high standards of quality was rewarded in May 2006 when we became the first national blood service in Asia to be accredited by the AABB. This accreditation brings us membership of a respected organisation of international blood banks in the scientific community and affirms our high level of professionalism and commitment to quality blood banking.

In our journey towards excellence, we partnered with national blood services in eight countries in the Asia-Pacific Region to form the Asian Pacific Blood Network [APBN]. In June 2006, we hosted the official launch of the APBN, which aims to promote blood safety and efficiency of operations through global co-operation and information sharing. This followed the signing of a confidentiality agreement amongst the member countries, which was formally ratified on 28 November 2006.

We are also members of International Society of Blood Transfusion [ISBT] Working Parties for Haemovigilance, Blood Supply Management and the Hepatitis B Working Group. Along with Japan, Singapore is the only other country in Asia to join the European Haemovigilance Network, which aims to collect and exchange data on the effects of blood transfusion.



## Mapping Out New Areas of Research

We actively seek to take advantage of the latest developments in blood banking science and information technology to improve the quality and efficiency of the services we offer.

Our new state-of-the-art Cell Processing Laboratory was opened in 2006. This new facility is a fully GMP-compliant [Good Manufacturing Practice] laboratory dedicated to translational cell therapy work. We are currently involved in collaborative trials with the Singapore General Hospital. Ongoing research is also being conducted in the rapidly evolving fields of immunotherapy and new cellular therapies.

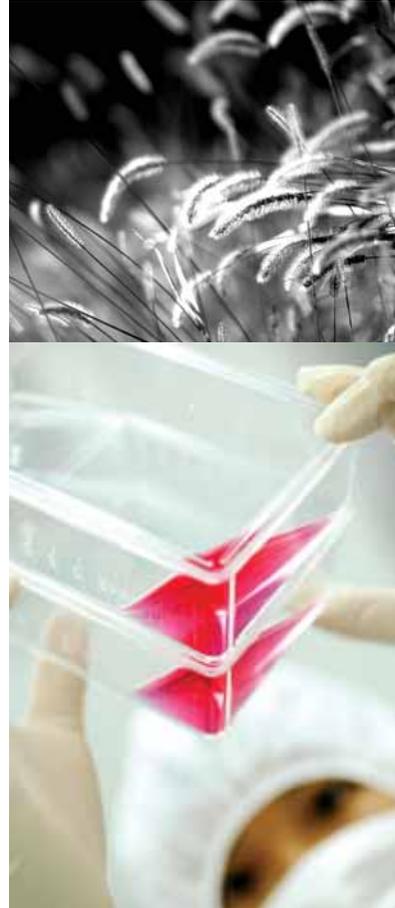
## Gaining Momentum through Strategic Alliances

### Our Local Role

2007 marks the sixth year of a strategic partnership with the Singapore Red Cross [SRC] to manage our national blood donor programme. The blood donor recruitment effort is complemented by our ongoing public awareness campaign on the importance of regular voluntary blood donations and the need to foster blood donation as a healthy lifestyle activity.

### Forging Closer Ties within the Region

In our capacities as a World Health Organisation [WHO] Collaborating Centre for Transfusion Medicine and the WHO Regional Quality Management Training Centre, we continued to help in initiatives to improve the standard and practices of transfusion medicine in the Western Pacific region. Our regional training projects include conducting training for the blood transfusion service in Myanmar, providing external proficiency testing in pre-transfusion testing in blood centres across the Western Pacific region, and working with the SRC to provide donor recruitment training programmes in Thailand and Myanmar. We have also worked with Nanyang Polytechnic to produce, on behalf of the WHO, a training CD entitled "Quality in Blood Collection".







### **The International Arena**

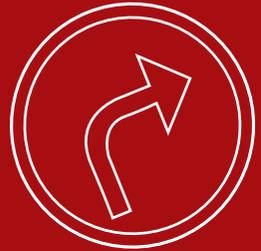
We make it a priority to share and exchange knowledge within the global arena. In the year, we continued to participate actively in key international conferences as speakers and attendees in the transfusion medicine arena. These included conferences organised by the WHO, AABB, International Society of Cellular Therapy, Japanese Society of Blood Transfusion, ISBT and South Asian Association of Transfusion Medicine. We are also a member of the WHO-convened Global Collaboration in Blood Safety.

To harmonise with international practices, we converted to the ISBT 128 barcode labelling system, an international standardised barcode nomenclature for transfusion medicine.



## Engaging with the Community

In June 2006, we celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Blood Programme in Singapore with a unique World Blood Donor Day sandcastle-building activity and beach carnival. This was followed in July 2007 by a two-day scientific symposium themed “Evolving Trends in Transfusion Medicine”, where regional and international experts in the field of transfusion medicine shared their expertise.



## The Next Leg of Our Journey

In the coming year, we will be focusing our efforts on achieving accreditation of our Transplant Support Unit with the American Society of Histo-compatibility and Immuno-Genetics [ASHI]. Successful accreditation with ASHI will give our transplant support laboratory added international standing and recognition.

New technologies to be introduced in blood collection include Red Cell Apheresis donation. In Blood Donation Processing, the use of semi-automated blood component extractors will be introduced to streamline the workflow and further enhance the quality of blood components processed. Pathogen-inactivated frozen plasma and platelets using state-of-art pathogen inactivated technology will also be closely studied to determine their suitability for use in transfusions. Prevalence studies of the West Nile and Dengue viruses in our blood donor population will help to determine if new screening tests will need to be added for the blood supply.

We will apply the latest information technology to create more patient-centric diagnostic laboratory services including Automated Pre-Transfusion Testing system, molecular analysis for red cell antigens, flow cytometry for Human Lymphocyte Antigen cross-matching and antibody screening.

Information technology will also be used to enhance our web portal for blood donors - Donorcare@HSA. Through innovative new additions, we hope to provide added convenience and ease in the blood donation process. Collaboration with Republic Polytechnic in utilising process analysis tools in areas such as blood collection, processing and patient testing will further aid us in streamlining our processes and improving efficiency.

Blood conservation is a new area in which we will work with hospitals to enable effective management of our blood supply. Through use of procedures such as autologous blood cell salvage, we can work with clinical colleagues to maximise every drop of blood that we collect.