



## **JOINT NEWS RELEASE BY THE SINGAPORE RED CROSS AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY**

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### **OVER 2,000 BLOOD DONORS AND ORGANISATIONS RECOGNISED AT WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY**

At today's World Blood Donor Day's celebrations, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) and Health Sciences Authority (HSA) honoured 2,076 committed blood donors and 37 organisations for their steadfast role in saving lives and continuous support towards the National Blood Programme. Guest of Honour Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, presented the awards to the recipients at the ceremony.

2 These contributions are especially significant given the current challenges facing Singapore's blood supply. As Singapore approaches super-aged status in 2026, ensuring a sustainable blood supply is becoming more urgent. Our ageing population presents a double challenge: patients aged 60 and above now account for 60 per cent of total red blood cell usage, and yet we face a shrinking pool of eligible donors. New blood donor numbers have declined by more than 11% since 2013 and this is a concerning trend as demand for blood will continue to grow.

#### **Expanding Blood Donor Pool**

3 To expand the donor pool, HSA will be raising the upper age limit for first-time blood donors from 60 to 65 years from 1 January 2026. With our population's increasing healthy life expectancy and available local data showing that among our first time donors,



adverse donor reaction decreases with advancing age up to the current first-time donation age limit of 60-year-old, HSA assessed that it is timely to increase the upper age limit. This mirrors international practices of blood services in territories such as Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Korea and United Kingdom.

### **New Initiative: Adopt the Bloodbank Award**

4 In addition to broadening the age range of eligible donors, we are also partnering workplaces to further expand the donor pool. SRC and HSA have been working with organisations for the past year to adopt a Bloodbank and promote blood donation amongst their employees in their adopted Bloodbanks. As part of this year's ceremony, we will be recognising three organisations with the inaugural 'Adopt the Bloodbank' Award for their support and success in collecting more than 40 units of blood annually at their adopted Bloodbanks: Varadhatus Ratanarama Association, Combat Service Support Command (CSSCOM), and the Singapore Bangladesh Society (SBS).

5 SBS representing the Bangladeshi community in Singapore, promotes active community engagement through volunteer initiatives. Blood donation is a key highlight of their community service efforts. SBS organises bi-annual blood donation drives at Bloodbank@HSA, strategically scheduled in January and July/August. With approximately 600 active members, they mobilise their community through various communication channels including WhatsApp groups, social media platforms, and emailers. To enhance participation and create a welcoming atmosphere, they provide refreshments for donors, making each blood donation drive a meaningful community event for their members.



6 This award introduces a new avenue for community participation beyond hosting traditional blood drives on-site. Their success opens the door for more organisations to move beyond once-off drives and take sustained ownership of Singapore's blood supply needs.

### **Recruiting New Generation of Donors**

7 Several youth-focused initiatives are also underway. The YouthInspire club, launched at last year's World Blood Donor Day, has successfully attracted 450 youths aged 13 to 25 to run donor recruitment events and campaigns for youths. YouthInspire co-organised blood donation drives in collaboration with the fan clubs of Olivia Rodrigo and Gracie Abrams, attracting 150 participants, with more than half coming forward to donate blood. Through their innovative approach of integrating popular culture with social purpose, YouthInspire is proving that giving blood can be meaningful and cool.

8 Looking ahead, SRC and HSA will hold the inaugural National Blood Dialogue on 26 September 2025. A key highlight of the dialogue is the Blood Donation Advocacy Challenge for youths aged between 16 to 25 years old, organised in collaboration with the National Youth Council (NYC). Teams will develop campaigns aimed at increasing blood donation among young people. Three finalists will be selected based on their campaign's creativity, feasibility, and potential community impact. These finalists will present their proposals at the dialogue. The winning teams will receive the NYC Young ChangeMakers grant to implement their campaigns. Those interested to participate or attend the dialogue can look out for more information on the HeyBloodBuddy Instagram page in the upcoming months.



## **Making Blood Donation a Lifestyle**

9 To ensure a sustainable blood supply, Singapore also needs more regular donors. While there are many who donate blood, only 4 in 10 donors donate more than once a year. This low rate of repeat donation underscores the urgent need to cultivate more committed, regular donors who make blood donation part of their lifestyle.

10 Among those answering this call are Cris Anthony and Kaitlyn Sam, both 25-year-olds. Cris, a software engineer, has already achieved 21 donations despite his young age. Meanwhile, Kaitlyn's journey began at 16, inspired by her parents who were regular donors. She has since made 22 donations, and her commitment grew even stronger when her parents had to temporarily stop donating due to health issues. They are among 25 exemplary youth donors honoured with the Youthphoria award.

11 The impact of regular donors extends beyond their individual contributions. Mr Rajesh S/O Sobragemal, a Titanium award holder with 178 donations, has inspired numerous friends to become donors themselves, creating a ripple effect in the community. Mr Rajesh began his donation journey at 19, following in the footsteps of his late father, a dedicated blood donor and advocate.

12 Regular donations make a profound difference in patients' lives. For patients like Mr Elvis Chung, aged 52, blood donations are a lifeline. Mr Chung was diagnosed with Thalassemia Major when he was 7 and received occasional blood transfusions in his early years. He has been receiving regular blood transfusions once every three weeks from 2019. "Thanks to your donations, I've enjoyed a fulfilling career of almost 30 years in auditing and banking. You might never meet the people who receive your blood, but you make a real difference. Your gift gives us life, hope and dignity," shared Mr Chung.



13 Acknowledging the contributions of blood champions at the ceremony, Singapore Red Cross Chairman Mr Tan Kai Hoe said, “With your help, we hope to grow this dedicated community of lifesavers and advocates, who will inspire even more people to begin their lifesaving journey. In making blood donation a part of your lifestyle, you bring not just life-saving support to patients but also hope and comfort to their families.”

14 Adjunct Professor (Dr) Raymond Chua, Chief Executive Officer of Health Sciences Authority added on to acknowledge the blood donors and rally more youth donors, “Every blood donor is a silent hero – giving hope, giving selflessly and giving life. As we honour your life-saving gift today, I also want to call on our youth to step forward and be a part of something bigger. This mission of saving lives needs new champions, and we believe it can start with you.”

### **One Community, Many Lifesavers**

15 The theme this year, “One Community, Many Lifesavers” serves as a powerful reminder that lifesaving is the responsibility of all and not just an act of a few. The event saw more than 4,000 blood donors and their families enjoying fun carnival activities and a blood donation exhibition. About 200 donors gave blood at the event in a large-scale blood drive.

16 The event ended on a high note with performances from three-time Grammy-winning mix engineer, DJ David "Yungin" Kim, South Korean-American singer DeVita, DJ Terry, boyband Viral Affair, and Singaporean K-pop dance crew Z-Axis, in a special collaboration presented by +82, a Singapore-based K-culture media company, to attract new and youth donors to the lifesaving cause.

***Issued by the Singapore Red Cross and the Health Sciences Authority***



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### **About Singapore Red Cross**

Singapore Red Cross is a homegrown humanitarian organisation, dedicated to relieving human suffering, protecting lives and dignity, and responding to emergencies since 1949. We serve the vulnerable through our blood donor programme, home and day activity centre for the disabled, transport aid, elderaid, family life aid, and community first aid. We build capacity and resilience through our training academy, and volunteer and youth development. Beyond our shores, we mobilise and translate contributions from the donor community to relief and recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, with the aim of helping communities affected by disasters. For more information, please see [www.redcross.sg](http://www.redcross.sg).

### **About HSA's Blood Services Group**

The HSA's Blood Services Group, as the national blood service, secures the nation's blood supply by ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply. It is responsible for collecting, processing, testing and distributing blood and blood products to all hospitals in Singapore. It also provides specialised transfusion medicine services in immunohaematology and tissue typing.



## **ANNEX A**

<b>Award Category</b>	<b>Number of Donations</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Medal for Life	F: 150 M: 200	26	0	26
Titanium	F: 135 M: 175	16	2	18
Champion of Champions	F: 125 M: 150	33	2	35
Diamond	F: 100 M: 125	47	5	52
Gold	F: 70 M: 100	83	23	106
Ruby	F: 50 M: 75	138	61	199
Silver	F: 35 M: 50	286	139	425
Bronze	F: 25 M: 25	897	293	1,190
YOUTHphoria	F: 20 M: 20	19	6	25
Blood Champion (Gold)	Organisational partners who, through organising blood donation drives, achieved a total collection of more than 350 units of blood with an average collection of 100 units per drive			
Blood Champion (Merit)	Organisational partners who, through organising blood donation drives, achieved a total collection of more than 150 units of blood with an average collection of 75 units per drive			



Adopt A Bloodbank	Organisations who had adopted a bloodbank and committed minimally two group bookings with collections of 40 units of blood and above in 2024.
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## **ANNEX B**

### **About the National Blood Programme**

Since 1947, the National Blood Programme (previously the Singapore Blood Transfusion Service) has sought to ensure that all patients in Singapore, regardless of nationality and residential status, have access to a safe and sufficient blood supply when they need it.

The Health Sciences Authority and the Singapore Red Cross (which was appointed the national blood recruiter in April 2001) work in partnership to collect blood from donors on a voluntary, non-remunerated basis. Each year, more than 118,000 units of blood are needed to save lives.

In 2024, 128,019 units of donation blood were used to benefit more than 34,000 patients in Singapore as follows:

- Surgery (including trauma and heart surgery): 39%
- General medicine: 32%
- Haematology (blood diseases): 10%
- Oncology: 10%
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology: 5%
- Others: 4%

To meet the annual blood transfusion needs, the Singapore Red Cross focuses on three main functions:

- Recruitment and retention of blood donors
- Promotion and education on the importance of blood donations to increase public awareness
- Organisation of mobile blood donation drives in the community

In 2024, the Singapore Red Cross recruited 79,365 donors with the support of community partners.