**IBTS urges donors to ensure that blood is available for patients over the Christmas and New Year period**

The IBTS is urging donors to make a special effort to give blood leading up to and over the Christmas and New Year period. This is especially important given on-going challenges with donor availability due to the level of illness in the community, with nearly 20% of all appointments being cancelled weekly.

“We really need blood donor’s help, we know it’s been hard and our donors have been amazing in their support.  Donating blood is a selfless act for the person who gives it but is a priceless gift to the person who receives it. For the next 3 weeks, we will need to make over 10,000 appointments to safely support the health service over Christmas and the New Year” said Paul McKinney Director of Donor Services and Logistics.

“This is even more relevant for those donors with O-, B-, and A- blood for which we continue to see very high demand from the hospitals. We are arranging extra clinics on Sunday 18th December, Tuesday 27th, and Friday 30th plus 2 special neonatal clinics in Dublin on Friday 23rd to collect blood for young babies, who can only receive compatible blood which is no more than 5 days old since collection.

“On any given day 200 patients receive transfusions in Irish hospitals, and the demand for blood, even over Christmas, is constant. We rely on our donors and are urging them to give a priceless gift this Christmas, the gift of life,” said Mr McKinney.

If you receive a text from us to make an appointment please do so and make sure you do our eligibility test on [www.giveblood.ie](http://www.giveblood.ie) before you do to make sure you can give blood on this occasion.

If you do make an appointment please try and keep it as we are having large amounts of no shows and cancellations at short notice.

We would also like to thank donors for their incredible support in what has been a very challenging year for everybody and we hope they continue that support into 2023.

Further clinic information can be found on [www.giveblood.ie](http://www.giveblood.ie).