

TheDonor

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR BLOOD DONORS

WINTER 2011



**National
Transplant Week
is a hit!**

**Counting down to
London 2012**

JAYNE TORVILL

Happy to be donating again

Donor Helpline – 0300 123 23 23

NHS

"If I ever needed an organ,
I'd obviously take one."

"I might register as a donor,
but not right now."



Would you take an organ if you needed one? Nearly everyone would. But only 29% of us have joined the Organ Donor Register. Three people who need a transplant die every day due to the shortage of organs.

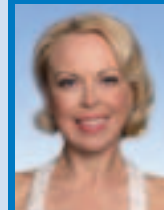
If you believe in organ donation, prove it.

Register now at organdonation.nhs.uk | Text SAVE to 84118

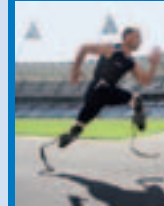


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your news, views
and interesting
or unusual
donor stories.

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Happy to be donating again

When a family member needed blood, gold medallist ice skater Jayne Torvill decided it was time to become a regular blood donor again

When did you become a blood donor and where did you start donating?

I started giving blood in the late seventies; the blood service came into my office where I was working, asking people to donate. I did it for a couple of years but then I started travelling with skating and gave up work so I didn't do it for a long while. I started giving blood again about five or six years ago. I donate at sessions in East Sussex.

Why did you start donating again?

I started again because a family member was very ill and needed blood. I started to think about how many other people are given blood. I think a lot of people don't donate until they know someone who needs it, and this can motivate them to become a regular donor. Just recently too, a friend of mine with cancer has needed a blood transfusion.

Tell us about your involvement with National Blood Week in June this year.

It's the first time I have been involved in National Blood Week and the first time I have really spoken about giving blood. I was amazed to find out during the week that such a small number of people give blood; it really was quite a surprise. I was very happy to help and hopefully I can do more in the future.



LIFE STORY

- Born in 1957 in Clifton, Nottingham
- Attended Clifton Hall Girls' Grammar School, later worked as an insurance clerk
- Started ice skating at the age of eight and in 1971, aged just 14, became the British National Pairs Champion with partner Michael Hutchinson
- 1975 – paired up with Christopher Dean and they came fifth in the 1980 Winter Olympics. Dean gave up his job as a policeman and Torvill stopped work as an insurance clerk so they could skate together full-time
- 1980 – made an MBE
- 1984 – she and Christopher win Gold at the Sarajevo Winter Olympics and were watched by a British television audience of 24 million
- 2000 – Jayne is made an OBE
- 2007 – Jayne and Christopher star in ITV's popular Saturday evening show, *Dancing on Ice*, afterwards appearing in six further series.
- Jayne lives in East Sussex with her husband and their two children, Kieran and Jessica. ●



"I was amazed to find out that such a small number of people give blood; it really was quite a surprise"

Left and below: Jayne dances with Christopher Dean



ITV's *Dancing on Ice* has been a huge success. Are you currently working on the next series or are you involved with any other projects?

I've just started working on the next series and filming has started. I've also been busy promoting the *Dancing on Ice Tour 2011* DVD which was released in November.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

Winning the Olympics was a big highlight! The success of *Dancing on Ice* has also been fantastic – Christopher and I both had such long careers that there've been many happy times and highlights.

You must be busy with two children and a TV career. What is your favourite thing to do at the end of a busy day's filming?

My favourite thing to do the end of a busy day is relax with a nice glass of Chardonnay! ●

£4m stem cell funding will help save more lives

Up to 200 extra lives could be saved each year, thanks to new measures to make stem cells more available to patients. The changes are being made possible by £4m of new Government funding. This will pay for more cord blood collections at hospitals and closer collaboration between the British Bone Marrow Registry (BBMR) and the blood cancer charity, Anthony Nolan.

NHSBT runs the BBMR and the NHS Cord Blood Bank (which stores cord blood stem cells) and provides specialist support to facilitate haematopoietic (blood) stem cell transplants for patients. These stem cells can save the lives of patients whose own bone marrow is not working due to disease or following treatments for leukaemia or other cancers.

The Government announced the new funding following recommendations made last year by the UK Stem Cell Strategic Forum, led by NHSBT. As well as the increase in cord blood collections in hospitals, NHSBT and Anthony Nolan have consolidated the information held in their adult bone marrow donor registries.

Between them, the registers provide access to over 700,000 adult donors in the UK, and aligning them speeds up the process of donor searches.

Anthony Nolan are now the single point of contact for UK transplant centres searching for a matched adult donor or cord blood unit. This initiative means that blood donors registered with the BBMR may in future be asked for permission to be contacted by Anthony Nolan if they are ever identified as a match for a patient needing a stem cell transplant. ●

Multi-faith event to thank donors

Faith and civic leaders attended a special meeting in London to give thanks to blood donors from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

The multi-faith event was held at the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Golders Green, London, where high-profile guests included His Divine Holiness Acharya Swamishree Purushottampriyadasji Maharaj as well as representatives from the Christian, Jewish, Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim and Dharmic faiths.

Bengu Shail, a leukaemia patient who has received numerous blood transfusions as part of her treatment, spoke at the event about the importance of blood donation in the BME community.

His Divine Holiness Acharya was also presented with a letter from donors (pictured above) recognising his efforts in promoting blood donation across the world. ●



Royal recognition for organ donation success

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust has been recognised for its work on promoting and increasing organ donation.

The Queen's Medical Centre (QMC) was visited by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester in November, where she unveiled a bronze sculpture dedicated to all the deceased organ and tissue donors who gave the gift of life in their death. A 'Circle of Life' memorial will be erected near the medical school at the QMC.

Last year (2010/11) was a record year for the organ donation team at the Trust with more organ donors than any other trust in the Midlands. More than 55 patients benefited from transplants

from 17 deceased donors, representing a 90 per cent increase on 2009/10.

A memorial service was held at Winchester Cathedral in October to remember all those who have died and donated their organs for transplant.

More than 150 people from across the country gathered to give thanks for the lives of those who had helped others in death. ●

Safer than ever

The latest annual report from SHOT (Serious Hazards of Transfusion) has shown that blood transfusions are now safer than ever. Last year was the first year in which there were no confirmed cases of transfusion-transmitted infection. There was also a 29 per cent reduction in the number of reported incidents of the wrong blood or blood products being given to patients. ●

Celebrating another successful year

Welcome to the winter issue of *The Donor* magazine and an opportunity to celebrate the passing of another year of continuity in serving the blood transfusion needs of patients and also to mark the introduction of some changes - including the launch of *The Donor e-magazine*.

As winter approaches our blood stocks reduce as people suffer from colds and flu which means they cannot donate. Weather conditions, pre-Christmas preparations and dark nights also take their toll on donor availability. So if you are able to donate in the coming weeks, please try and do so because the need for blood never stops.

I would like to thank you for your outstanding efforts over the last 12 months, whether it was your first donation or you have been giving blood for many years - your loyalty and generosity are an incredible commitment and mean so much to those who received transfusions over the last year.

I wish you good health and happiness over the festive season and another year of successful working together to save lives in 2012.

Lynda Hamlyn
Chief Executive



NHS
Blood and Transplant

7,000 blood donations every day.

You're just as important.

Life changing career opportunities

You're already helping us to save lives, but have you thought about joining us? You don't need to have medical or scientific experience for a lot of our roles, because we'll give you all the training and support you need.

(In fact, some of our donor carers started off as donors.) We recruit to a variety of roles including laboratory support posts, drivers, registered nurses, consultants and administrators, as well as donor carers. You could be a valued member of our team in a friendly, forward thinking environment - and enjoy a great range of NHS benefits too.

So take a look at our website to see what you could do:

www.nhsbtcareers.co.uk



Saving lives together

Blood donation ban lifted

Men who have had sex with men (MSM) will no longer be excluded from giving blood, providing they meet other donor selection criteria. The ban has been lifted following an evidence-based review by the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO).

Men whose last sexual contact with another man was more than 12 months ago will now be able to donate, if they meet the other donor selection criteria. Men who have had anal or oral sex with another man in the past 12 months, with or without a condom, are still asked not to donate blood.

The change brings MSM in line with other groups who are deferred from giving blood for 12 months due to infection risks associated with sexual behaviours.

Dr Lorna Williamson, NHSBT's medical and research director, says, "Our priority as a blood service is to provide a safe and sufficient supply of blood for patients. We welcome this review and its conclusions." ●

Our 50,000 friends

We wanted to say a big thanks to all our friends on social media. We've just reached the landmark figure of 50,000 supporters on our facebook page, which was launched in May for National Blood Week, and support is still growing. We'll continue to keep you updated on the world of blood donation with regular posts and interesting stories.

Support on our organ donation facebook page has also been steadily rising, with many of you following the events of our Black and Asian campaign as they

Thanks to social media, it's never been easier for us to stay in touch with you

happen. If you haven't joined our page already, come and see the latest pictures from our events and find out which celebrities are supporting us.

Making things easier

We recently updated the homepage on our NHSBT site at www.nhsbt.nhs.uk with a fresh, new modern design that is easier to navigate so you can find the information you need quickly.

Check out the news section, dedicated sections about blood and organ donation, details of our performance and the online subscription service to our e-communications.

We are also working on updating a number of other websites at the moment and we recently launched a new annual review at www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/annualreview and strategic plan site at www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/strategicplan.

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/NHSBlood www.facebook.com/organ donationuk

TWITTER <http://twitter.com/GiveBloodNHS> <http://twitter.com/NHSBT>

Sign up now to receive The Donor online

This edition of *The Donor* is now available via email. If you would like to receive *The Donor* and other communications from us by email in future, please complete the online form at www.blood.co.uk/donor.

You will need your donor number, printed on your donor card and session invitation letters.

www.blood.co.uk/donor



High flying family donors

Three generations of blood donors sky diving together – that is rare! Dedicated blood donor Eric Bagwell, from Swindon, his son John, 43, and grandson Jake, 19, all have the sky diving bug and decided it would be good to perform a jump together.

Eric, who has given a fantastic 353 donations of platelets and whole blood, made his first static line jump in 1974. John made his first jump when he was 16 and loved it so much he went on to become a tandem instructor. For Jake, the past year has seen him make his first blood donation and first skydive.

Eric says, "I enjoy giving blood and skydiving and I hope that the vast amount of blood I have given over my lifetime has gone on to save many lives." ●

Safer blood for Uganda

In a country where many villages are remote and HIV and malaria are prevalent, the collection of safe blood from regular, willing and unpaid donors is a difficult task. Jackie Morgan and Beverley Allen who work for us flew out to Northern Uganda in January to see how they could help with the challenges the Ugandan Red Cross (URC) faces.

Beverley is an area donor services manager in Nottingham and Jackie is a senior donor services manager, so both are experienced in making sure donor sessions run smoothly.

"We did our research so that we could walk in the shoes of the local people while we were there," says Beverley. "I researched the history of Northern Uganda, a post conflict zone, so that I could appreciate

"In Britain we are fortunate to have a safe and sufficient blood supply. However in Uganda stocks of donated blood often run dangerously low"

the impact of the past 20 years on Gulu, a city in Northern Uganda.

"We spent two days fact finding to help us set up a partnership with URC for the following 18 months to make improvements to the

How two of our team are making a difference to blood services in Uganda



Above: Setting out for a day's collection

Right: Jackie (centre left) and Beverley (centre right) meeting the Ugandan blood service staff



recruitment, retention and mobilisation of blood donors."

Challenges

As they were in Uganda for just seven days, Beverley and Jackie had little time to get acclimatised before setting to work. They were teamed up with two representatives from the URC and visited a blood bank, a maternity ward and a children's ward in St Mary's Hospital Lacor as well as outdoor blood donor sessions in Gulu. They soon realised the challenges Uganda is facing.

Jackie says, "In Britain we are

fortunate to have a safe and sufficient blood supply. However in Uganda stocks of donated blood often run dangerously low, meaning that safe donated blood isn't always available for patients. We were told that this sometimes leads to the use of blood from riskier, paid or family-related sources."

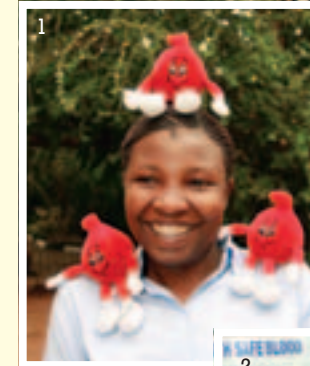
The URC is partnered with the Ugandan National Blood Transfusion Service (UBTS) and aims to reach out to rural communities to make blood donation more

accessible and to educate potential blood donors about the importance of unpaid, safe and regular blood donation.

The country has high rates of hepatitis as well as HIV, and each blood donation is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C and syphilis. This increased risk of infection means it is very important to retain blood



1,2,3: Donors and staff at an open air blood donor session.
4: Blood processing in a lab



donors who have already been identified as free of infection and ask them to donate regularly (in Uganda women can donate three times a year, while men can donate four times).

To help reach potential volunteer blood donors in rural communities the URC often run outdoor blood donor sessions, mainly because of the lack of suitable indoor venues. UBTS staff travel by 4X4 and take all the equipment and consumables they need for that day.

10km walk

Usually a URC team member will visit a village about a week before a blood donor session is scheduled, to raise awareness of the session and encourage locals to donate. It is not uncommon for donors to walk

up to 10km to give blood. When the sun goes down the drivers turn their vehicles round to shine the headlights onto the donation area.

Jackie says, "From talking directly with staff and blood donors, as well as seeing blood donation sessions first hand, we were able to share the planning procedures we use back home to help keep consistent stock levels.

"Uganda routinely runs out of blood in January as the schools are closed and many blood donors are students. We were able to suggest simple changes to the

system and timeframe they have for planning sessions locally, their database management and for networking with other Ugandan agencies to reach out and educate communities about the need for voluntary blood donation."

Billy Blood Drop

The first joint NHSBT/URC initiative the 'Billy Campaign' was piloted

To read a letter from the *Thank you for life* book click the link at www.organdonation.nhs.uk

and May. Beverley says, "I thought long and hard to establish how we could use the Billy Blood Drop toys to spread the message into the communities."

After much deliberation, the group decided that a Billy toy would be given to every child under five at St Mary's Hospital in Lacor whose life is saved through a blood transfusion. Back in the community, Billy will stand as a reminder to everyone of the importance of giving blood.

Jackie adds, "From the work we have done we hope that supplies of blood will be higher this January. I have learnt a lot from my visit, particularly that if you 'think big' you can make a difference and save more lives as a result." ●

Let's hear it for donors!

Every year, countries around the world organise events to celebrate World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) on June 14th, the birthday of Dr Karl Landsteiner, the Austrian scientist who discovered the ABO blood group system. This year, we decided to make the most of WBDD by turning it into a week-long celebration.

World Blood Donor Day gave us just the opportunity we needed to say thank you to all our donors. But why take only a day when you can make a whole week of events and celebrations up and down the country? We report on our very first National Blood Week



Jenny Frost, far left and Sophie Ellis-Bextor, left

tens of thousands of new donors to fill the gap left by donors who can't give blood any more. As a result, almost 21,000 people registered to become blood donors and a further 98,000 people actually made

But behind the fun there were some important aims. We wanted to get as many people as possible to give blood, and encourage those of you who haven't donated

"Almost 21,000 people registered... and a further 98,000 people actually made appointments"

for a while to think about coming back and donating more often. Most importantly, we wanted to thank those of you who donate regularly for your loyal support

and generosity.

We arranged celebrations up and down the country. There were medieval music groups playing to people who signed up in Cambridge, primary school children took out their paints and crayons for a colouring competition in Watford, the town crier rallied support in Chester and students at a college in Newcastle helped to create artwork to celebrate the WBDD theme of 'Paint the world red'.

Donors and patients also turned

Celebrations in Chester (1,2), Reading (3) and Birmingham (4)

out in Brighton, Liverpool, London and Birmingham, while in Yorkshire the

Bradford Bulls rugby league team even muscled in to boost the numbers of people registering to donate in the area.

Celebrity support

Celebrities were happy to join in: singer Sophie Ellis-Bextor kicked off the campaign by donating blood at our West End donor centre in London. She says, "When I heard about all the different uses of blood and the mothers who receive blood during labour, it really hit me how important it is for me

to do my bit to help."

Singer and presenter Jenny Frost popped in to the West End too to book an appointment; while Coronation Street actress Kym Marsh and ex-Eastender Joe Swash pledged their support



via Twitter and encouraged their followers to make a date to donate. Although we only recently set up Facebook and Twitter accounts, we managed to attract over 10,000 followers to the Blood Facebook page and our Twitter feed increased from 200 followers to 900 in just one week - pretty impressive!

As you can see, the week provided a great opportunity to put

blood donation in the spotlight. There were over 202,500 visits to www.blood.co.uk, with nearly 41,000 hits on WBDD alone, the busiest day ever recorded on the website! Overall, the aim of National Blood Week was to recruit

appointments to donate.

Thanks to the hard work of donors, staff, celebrities and the general public, the week was one of our most successful campaigns to date and we hope this is just the start of even greater success to come. ●

WBDD across the globe

BANGLADESH – A colourful rally was held at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital which included free blood grouping and information on the Voluntary Blood Donation Programme.

GERMANY – A 12-hour blood donation 'marathon' in Essen included information on blood and component donation. Everyone who attended received a WBDD photo.

IRELAND – Blood and platelets donors who had reached their 100th donation were honoured at an awards ceremony attended by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese.

NEW ZEALAND – All the donor centres around the country celebrated with special cupcakes and treats for donors. Celebrities and politicians also donated.

SINGAPORE – There was a day of fun at the Science Centre and donors were also treated to a day of entertainment which included 'Blood Runs', 'Red Parade' and a children's colouring competition.

SWITZERLAND – World Health Organisation staff and volunteers made a 'human blood drop' at Place des Nations in Geneva where a special blood donation clinic was set up.

WALES – Wales Millennium Centre in the heart of Cardiff Bay was lit up red in honour of WBDD and members of the Welsh rugby union national squad raised a red flag to show their support. ●

Cord blood set to save more lives

Since it was set up in 1996 the NHS Cord Blood Bank has helped save many lives. Thanks to new investment cord blood is now helping even more patients

Hundreds of patients have already benefited from cord blood donations. This blood, which is found in the placenta and umbilical cord after a birth, is rich in blood stem cells similar to those found in bone marrow.

These special cells can be used to treat, and sometimes cure, many different cancers, immune deficiencies and genetic disorders.

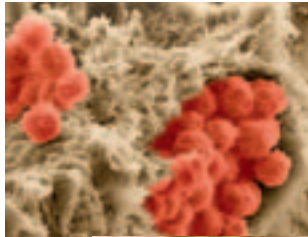
There are currently six hospitals in and around the London area with NHS Cord Blood Bank collection centres. Mothers booked in to give birth are invited to think about donating their babies' cord blood. If they register their interest, trained staff contact them before the birth to ask some simple lifestyle questions and to obtain verbal consent for the collection, testing and use of the donation.

Completely safe

The procedures used to collect cord blood are completely safe and risk-free for both mother and baby. This is because the collection of cord blood is made from the placenta after the baby is born,

after the cord is cut and after the placenta has been delivered. Cord blood donations are handled by our NHSBT staff, leaving the midwife completely free to care for mother and baby.

Dr Martin Guttridge, head



Foetal blood stem cells (left) donated at birth are helping to save lives



of the NHS Cord Blood Bank, explains, "We have worked closely with midwives since the bank opened in 1996 to ensure donating is absolutely safe for mother and baby. Mothers should feel reassured they can safely donate and know they have helped others who need a life-saving stem cell transplant."

Our six cord blood collection

centres are at Barnet General, Watford General, Northwick Park, Luton and Dunstable and St George's Hospital in Tooting. University College Hospital started collecting in November.

As there is a shortage of stem cell donors from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, all the cord blood centres are located in ethnically diverse areas, with the aim of collecting more cord blood donations from these communities.

In September, Watford General Hospital became the first centre to expand to a 24/7 service. These extended hours will now be rolled out to all the centres before the end of 2011. The extended hours mean mothers giving birth at the six hospitals will be able to donate their cord blood at whatever time their baby arrives. This will help save the lives of even more patients needing stem cell donations.

Investment

The increased hours have been made possible by a £4 million investment from the Government to NHSBT and Anthony Nolan so we can collaborate on improving stem cell services. As a result, more cord blood will be collected and stem cell donors and potential recipients will be matched far more quickly, reducing average search times to two weeks. It is estimated this will save an additional life every month. ●

STEVE GOSCHWISSNER/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY



Counting down to London 2012

Whilst the country looks forward to next summer's Olympic Games in London, we have been busy thinking about how to keep blood supplies running smoothly. Our teams across the country have been planning for over a year, looking at how other countries, such as Australia which hosted the 2000 Games in Sydney, managed their blood supplies and built stocks before all the events began.

The London Olympic activities

As the country limbers up for the 2012 Olympics, we have been busy planning how to keep blood supplies running smoothly during the Games

are spread over seven weeks: the athletes start arriving on July 14th and the official opening ceremony takes place on July 27th. There will be a fortnight break between the main Games and the Paralympics, which close on September 9th.

About half a million visitors are expected to come to the

Olympic Park every day, with visitor numbers in the London area also swelling. We're expecting local transport links to be interrupted by the Games so will prepare to move some blood donation sessions to alternative venues for donors who are affected. As part of our planning, we're

▶ also looking at how transport disruption may affect the delivery of donated blood to our centres for processing and testing. We'll also be making sure we can keep hospitals in the areas affected by the Games supplied with all the blood products they need.

Of course some venues can't be moved, such as our flagship West End donor centre in London and



other centres inside the capital, but we hope our donors will still be able to attend. We're planning on providing more opportunities to donate in the outer London and Essex areas, avoiding inner London where possible, and we are reviewing session times to avoid clashes with the main events.

Outside of London there are Olympic events taking place across Berkshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Dorset, as well as at venues in the north of England.

Make time to donate

Nearer the time we will be asking all our blood donors to make sure they keep their appointments during the seven weeks of the Games. Planning your donation around the events you particularly want to watch will help us as well as all the patients who rely on

"Our regular donors are the backbone of the service and we hope to encourage everyone to keep to their appointments before, during and after the Olympics"

blood products for their treatment. Remember too that summer is a time when stocks tend to fall, so it's even more important that you make a date to donate.

Jon Latham from marketing and contact services says, "our regular donors are the backbone of our service and we hope to encourage everyone to keep to their

Top: Tom Daley performed the first dive into the Aquatics Centre pool.

Above left: Sailing will take place in Weymouth.

Above: Paralympic gold medallist Oscar Pistorius visits Olympic Stadium

appointments before, during, and after the Olympics. Leading up to the Games, we'll be promoting the need for people to come forward so that we can have good blood stocks in place before they begin.

"We'll also be running a radio and social media campaign to raise awareness of the need for blood during this time, so if you haven't already visited our blood donation Facebook page, please "like" us at www.facebook.com/NHSblood or follow us on Twitter at @GiveBloodNHS to stay in touch with developments." ●

Olympic hope for blood donor Franki



Olympic hopeful Franki Jus-Burke from Putney says she gave her first blood donation this summer after seeing our appeal for young people to come forward to donate during National Blood Week.

"When I saw the news about the drop in young donors I felt compelled to donate. I made an appointment that day and gave blood the same week. It didn't hurt at all and was over very quickly. I've even managed to convince a few of my friends to do the same and I recently gave my second donation at the West End donor centre in London."

25-year-old Franki started rowing at the age of 13 after a school assembly by Newark Rowing Club persuaded her to try the sport. Three years later she made the Great Britain Junior Squad and from then on regularly represented Great Britain at international level.

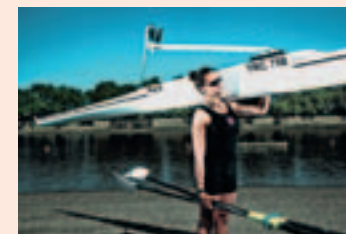
In 2004 she entered her first Junior World Championships and the following year won a bronze medal. That same year she also won the British

Championships in the Quadruple Scull and Single, and came second at Henley Women's Regatta.

Over the next few years Franki achieved further medals including silver at the World Championships in 2006. Sadly in 2008, as a result of a chronic back injury, she took premature retirement and early the following year started working at the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust. Here Olympic gold medallist

Dame Kelly put Franki in touch with her physiotherapist. With her diagnosis and help, Franki overcame the injury and with the support of Dame Kelly she decided to return to rowing and fulfil her potential of becoming an Olympic athlete.

In 2010, Franki enjoyed more victories on the water, but in March this year suffered a further setback with a hip injury and was forced to pull out of Olympic trials. She is continuing with her rehabilitation programme until she gets the all clear to get back in the boat and still has her sights firmly set on being part of the GB team in 2012. ●



National Transplant Week is a hit

Our 'What are you waiting for?' campaign during National Transplant Week has had a fantastic response, with a record number of people joining the NHS Organ Donor Register

We don't know if it was the flashmob singing 'Don't Stop Believing' at London's Spitalfields Market that did it, or high-profile supporters such as Jimmy Carr and Sarah Brown, but this year's National Transplant Week was a huge success, managing to capture local and national media attention and put the urgent case for more organ donors centre stage.

We needed more people to join the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR) and our theme, 'What Are You Waiting For?', was designed to grab the imagination of those who may never have considered what it feels like to be on a waiting list for an organ that could save their life.

We clearly struck a chord because we saw an astonishing increase of 352 per cent in online registrations to the ODR compared to an average month.

NHSBT's Gavin Evans says, "This year, for the first time, we got together with a group of organisations in developing Transplant Week activity. For our theme - 'What Are You Waiting For?' - we conducted a survey of the nation's waiting habits and



Clockwise from the left: Eddie Rooney of H&SCNI, Monica Hackett (SNOD), Stella Officer who's waiting for a kidney transplant and Steve Carter who donated his wife's organs, with his two children

attitudes and, with the help of a media psychologist, contrasted this with real-life patient stories. This highlighted the traumatic and uncertain reality of the wait for a new organ, compared with the relatively trivial waiting experiences most of us have to deal with. The theme also gave us a hook to explain how easy it is to join."

The flashmob singing event (see www.transplantweek.co.uk/flashmob.html) was arranged by Emily Thackray, who received a lung transplant and is now chair of the Live Life Then Give Life charity. Dr Chris Steele led a discussion on ITV's *This Morning* programme as part of a kidney research item, whilst on Twitter we received support from celebrities including actor James Corden, comedian Jimmy Carr, Channel 4's Krishnan Guru-Murthy, Dragon Duncan Bannatyne and wife of the former Prime Minister, Sarah Brown.

Sally Johnson, director of Organ Donation and Transplantation, says,

Sign up, speak up, save lives

Battlefront is an award winning Channel 4 online and TV project that follows a group of young campaigners trying to change the world. NHSBT and Alexandra Burke (amongst other celebrities) are supporting young campaigners Hope and Abby in their mission to encourage people to talk about organ donation with their friends and family and to sign up to the Organ Donor Registry. For more information on the campaign visit www.battlefront.co.uk/donors

A strong family bond



After living with chronic kidney disease for 12 years, in July 2010 Kanchan Bhagat (left) was told that her condition was getting worse and she would need regular hospital dialysis.

Daughter Swati put herself forward as a potential live donor for her mum and in March 2011, two months before her 30th birthday, Swati donated her left kidney. She says, "For me, I just wanted my mum in my life for as long as possible and if it meant that I had to give her a kidney then that was what I was going to do."

Now recovered, Swati and Kanchan actively encourage their friends and family members to join the Organ Donor Register. Swati adds, "Of course my story isn't that common and not everyone is going to donate an organ while they're alive but, for me, it's a simple deal. If you'd be willing to receive a donated organ, you should be willing to join the register." ●

"National Transplant Week is an event supported by us, but owned by the entire organ donation and transplantation community. It was marvellous to see so many individuals and organisations coming together to help make this year's Transplant Week such a success."

Reaching black and Asian communities

There is still a shortage of black and Asian organ donors; nearly 24 per cent of patients awaiting organ transplants are from these communities, yet they account for less than two per cent of those who have joined the ODR. So, this September, we renewed our efforts to encourage more black and Asian people to sign up and to discuss their wishes with their families.

The campaign, which runs to March 2012, features a range of different activities including events in shopping centres, supermarkets

and places of worship; direct marketing; press coverage and radio and online advertising. These will take place as the campaign travels around the country to cities such as London, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Manchester and Leicester, so don't forget to look out for us near you!

We are also using local media and businesses as well as celebrities such as Tim Campbell, *EastEnders* star Pooja Shah and Beverley Knight



EastEnders star Pooja Shah helping to spread the word about organ donation to black and Asian communities

to help us spread the message.

Pooja says, "I urge anyone from any background to join the NHS Organ Donor Register. But we're especially short of Asian people

"There is still a shortage of black and Asian organ donors; nearly 24 per cent of patients awaiting organ transplants are from these communities"

on the Register at the moment, and more than 1,000 Asians are currently waiting for a life-changing transplant operation as a result.

"When I thought about the difference I might make to the life of someone in my community it made it a very easy decision for me to sign up." ●

Radio Nation

As part of all our work within the black and Asian communities, we will also be working closely with the Community Media Association and urban community radio stations such as Preston FM, Desi Radio and Bradford Community Radio who mainly broadcast to black and minority ethnic (BME) audiences. We hope to raise awareness of organ donation by creating a number of programmes about deceased and living organ donation, so listen out! ●

★★★★★★★★★★★★★ STAR LETTER ★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Donating runs in the blood

I have been donating since I was 18 and on my 121st donation in August I took both my granddaughters along to donate with me. Ellena is 20 and Bethany is 21 (pictured left) and had never donated before, but they enjoyed the experience and said they will become regular donors. Later in the day, my daughter also went along to donate for the first time so now we have three generations of donors in the family. We are all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and actively encourage other members to become donors. I intend to keep donating as long as I am able.

BRIAN HEATH, BY EMAIL

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: *It's great that you encourage your family and other members of the church to donate and we hope to see you all at sessions in the future. Congratulations on your 121 donations.*

A Star Letter is chosen for every issue. The winner will be invited to a behind-the-scenes tour of a Blood Centre. He or she will don a white coat and see what happens to a donation of blood. (You must be 16 or over.)



This is your chance to tell us your news, views and interesting or unusual donor stories. Write to The Editor, The Donor, NHSBT Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5BG or email thedonor@nhsbt.nhs.uk

E-magazine thumbs up

I wanted to say how brilliant the first edition of *The Donor* e-magazine is. It looks good and has very informative content. I did not know you could donate removed bone after a hip operation – pretty amazing! The magazine is easy to navigate around and doesn't use paper. Congratulations.

JANET TRAFFORD, BY EMAIL

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: Thank you so much. An e-magazine is something we have wanted to do for a while as it saves paper and is much cheaper to produce.

The e-magazine was sent out to all donors who opted to receive information from us by email. We hope to be able to send out to more donors in the future. If other readers would like to receive *The Donor* and other communications from us by email in future, please complete the online form at www.blood.co.uk/donor

First transfusion

My story isn't very amazing, but quite interesting. I was apparently one of the first people to ever receive a 'complete exchange transfusion' in December 1945 when I was a couple of days old. This made me determined to become a blood donor myself and I have passed the 75 mark and am aiming to hit 100.

LESLEY ASMAN, WESTON SUPER MARE

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: It is very interesting and also amazing

that you have seen first hand how blood donations save lives. Well done on reaching the 75 donations mark and here's hoping you get to 100.

Where blood comes from

My children, and now some of my grandchildren, suffer from the blood disorder spherocytosis and occasionally need blood transfusions. So I feel it's good for them to attend donor sessions with me to show them where the blood they might receive comes from. I have been lucky and have always had a positive and friendly reception from the staff when I have taken the children along.

JENNY STOWELL, BY EMAIL

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: It's fantastic that you bring your grandchildren along when you donate and let them know where the blood they receive comes from. Thank you for your kind comments and



Blood donor to the rescue

When Colin Birt sat down to dinner with his wife, Anna, on board a luxury cruise liner, blood donation could not have been further from his mind. The couple were on the homeward leg of their cruise from Fort Lauderdale in Florida to Southampton and were happily discussing their next port of call when they heard an announcement over the PA system.

Colin says, "They were asking for regular O negative or O positive blood donors. Without hesitation I excused myself from the table and went to the ship's hospital. I was asked if I would donate blood to save the life of a fellow passenger. I agreed and soon after giving some samples for testing I was in one of the bed bays donating. Although the patient's name was never revealed to me it was amazing to know that my blood was being used to save the life of someone on board my ship." ●

► it's great that the children feel welcome at the session too.

Giving back

I would just like to say how much I appreciate everything NHSBT do. Several years ago my son fell under a train and lost his right arm and leg. He received 18 units of blood. Up to this point I had never donated blood, but I did my bit as soon as I could and have now paid back the 18 pints my son received and am on

to my 20th. Keep up the good work and a plea to all readers – please tell anyone you know that donating blood is worth it!

PETE WARING, BY EMAIL

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: Thank you for 'putting back' the blood your son received and more and for telling us about your experience.

Staff make me welcome

On my monthly visits to Cathedral Court in Sheffield to donate

platelets, the staff always have a smile. I sit back and wait for the familiar words 'just a small scratch' and Gail as always smiles and inserts the needle. Then I settle down with my feet up while Jackie takes my order for tea and biscuits. Thanks Gail, Julie, Jackie and all the staff for looking after me again and again.

DAVID KILNER FROM SHEFFIELD

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: Thank you for your kind feedback. Long may you enjoy the tea and biscuits. ●

IS IT TRUE THAT...

We reply to some of your questions about donating

Q You run campaigns throughout the year appealing for more blood donors, but do they actually work?

A Our campaigns are designed to get the most attention. For example, World Blood Donor Day, which falls on the 14th June every year, is always a time when we appeal for more blood donors and it is our biggest media campaign of the year. On average we collect ten per cent more blood on World Blood Donor Day than on a typical day in June. This year we also increased the number of blood donors registering by 20 per cent during our first ever National BloodWeek, which ran to coincide with World Blood Donor Day.

Q On my invitation letter it gives a panel number. What is this?

A A 'donor panel' is a group of donors who are eligible to donate at a certain session in a particular area. The panel number identifies that particular session. In some areas there are thousands of donors eligible to donate at one session. But because we may have ten sessions in that area in one year, and donors can only give three times a year, we have to divide donors

into panels to make sure every donor can donate when eligible.

Q How old is the oldest person to have donated blood in 2011?

A It's difficult to single out the oldest donor in 2011 because records are not always accurate due to changes from paper to computer systems. However, there are currently three blood donors who were born in the reign of King George V, the Queen's grandfather, who reigned from 1910 to 1936, and all of them have donated this year.

Q Once when I went to give blood I was told I had low iron levels and was deferred. I was disappointed, but I did go back next time. Do people always go back to donating after being told they can't?

A Donor deferral is pretty common, with most people being deferred at some stage in their donating lifetime. But only 55 per cent of donors who are temporarily suspended will return within 12 months.

Q I am a healthy 69-year-old and thought I would have to stop donating soon, but I've been told that the age limit for donors has been

lifted. When was this?

A The age limit of 70 for regular donors was lifted in December 2008. Now, as long as they have given blood in the last two years, donors can continue to donate for as long as they are healthy enough to do so. People who haven't donated before must still give blood before they are 65 if they want to become a regular donor.

Q How do flu and flu vaccinations affect giving blood?

A If you catch flu then you must leave it at least seven days from when you took your last antibiotic; if you have had diarrhoea then you need to wait 14 days. Either way, when you attend you must have been well for over a fortnight. If you've had a vaccination to prevent flu, you may donate as normal as long as you are fit and fully recovered. There are several steps we take to try to prevent the spread of a virus like flu. When you come to give blood we always ask if you have been in contact with anyone who has an infection and to tell us if you develop any illness shortly after you donate, so that we can stop your blood being given to a patient. ●

Am I rhesus positive or rhesus negative?

Actually you are neither - rhesus is the wrong name for this particular blood group. For more surprising facts, read on

What does it actually mean to be Rh negative or positive? At its simplest, you are Rh positive if you possess the D antigen, a type of protein, on the external surface of your red cells. If you do not have this D antigen, you are Rh negative.

D is probably the single most important antigen that is expressed on the human red cell, after the ABO antigens. It is made up of 416 amino acids which pass through the red cell membrane 12 times (rather like a worm). Six loops of the protein can be detected on the external surface of the red cell, and

both ends are on the inside of the red cell (see diagram below).

Rh in pregnancy

Whether or not you are Rh positive or Rh negative makes no difference to you in terms of your health and general well being, but it can make a difference if you require a transfusion or if you are an Rh negative woman carrying an Rh positive baby.

Normally people only make antibodies to the antigens they don't have, and only after they have been exposed to the 'foreign' antigen (the ABO system is

different in this respect). However, this happens only if you are a 'responder' – and not everyone is a 'responder'.

Suppose you are Rh negative (no D antigen on your red cells) and you are transfused with Rh positive blood. There is (approximately) an 80 per cent chance that you will 'respond' and make anti-D (the antibody to D) because your

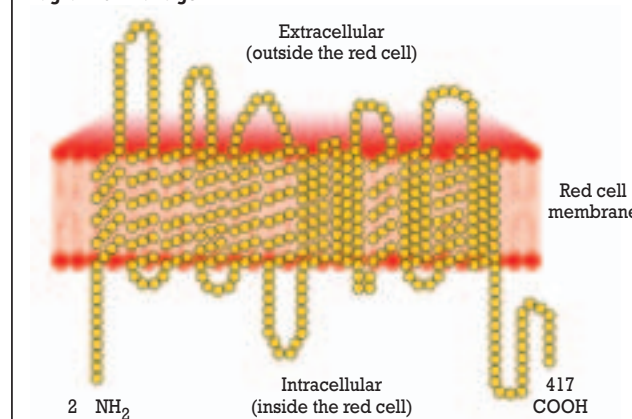
"Normally people only make antibodies to the antigens they don't have, and only after they have been exposed to the 'foreign' antigen"

immune system will recognise the Rh positive blood with the D antigen as 'foreign'.

If you have made anti-D, then the next time that you are transfused with Rh positive blood the anti-D will destroy this transfused blood.

In the case of an Rh negative woman carrying an Rh positive baby, because there is always a slight bleed from the baby's circulation into the mother's during

Diagram of D antigen

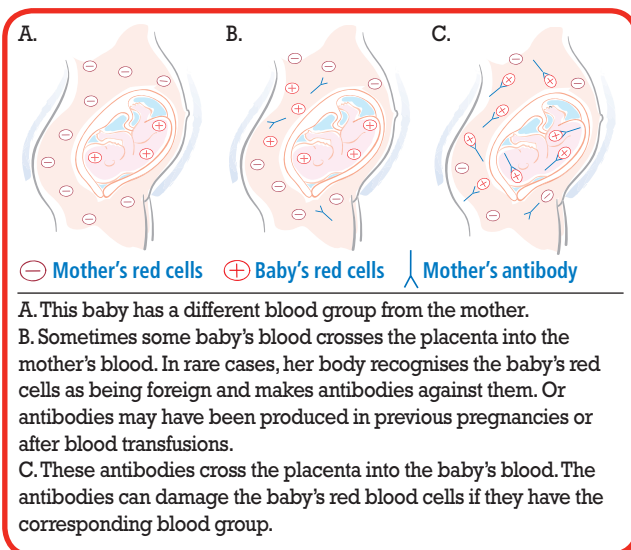


► pregnancy (this is perfectly normal), it can act like a transfusion of Rh positive blood into the mother.

She may produce anti-D in response. This antibody does not normally affect the pregnancy, but it can affect future pregnancies if the baby is Rh positive. The mother's anti-D can pass through the placenta and destroy the baby's red cells, causing serious harm to the baby. This has different names - blue baby syndrome and Rhesus baby syndrome - but the proper term is haemolytic disease of the foetus and newborn.

These days, it is very rare for Rh negative people to be transfused with Rh positive blood (and never, unless there is no alternative, for such blood to be transfused to a female of child-bearing age).

It is even rarer for pregnant Rh negative women to produce



anti-D, because, in most cases, we can prevent this happening. We give the mother a dose of anti-D immunoglobulin and this clears any of the baby's Rh positive red

cells from her circulation before her immune system has time to recognise these red cells as being 'foreign'. Thus, she does not produce anti-D of her own.

What's in a name?

The name Rhesus or rhesus is actually a misnomer for the blood group called Rh.

The confusion began after two workers, Landsteiner and Wiener, described an antibody that reacted very like another antibody described by two other workers, Levine and Stetson about 70 years ago.

Landsteiner and Wiener injected the red cells of a rhesus monkey (*Macaca rhesus*) into rabbits and guinea pigs and found this created an antibody in their blood. Levine and Stetson found a similar antibody in humans. The presence of the antibody confirmed the presence of a new blood group, distinct from ABO, and this antibody was called anti-D.

But the two antibodies (and therefore blood groups) were found to be not identical. The one described by Levine and Stetson was renamed anti-



LW, to recognise their work, whilst anti-D became the first antibody recognised in the Rh Blood Group System. In fact, we now know that anti-LW belongs to a completely different blood group system.

Do not worry if you get this wrong, as many very senior workers in the world of transfusion still refer to Rh as rhesus. ●

MARY EVANSZ PHOTOGRAPH

Not so simple

Unfortunately, humans being humans, Rh positive and Rh negative are not the only possibilities.

As the protein is 416 amino acids long, there is potential for one or more of these amino acids to be replaced by different amino acids, or, indeed for some of these amino acids to be missing completely. These are rare occurrences, but they do happen.

If an amino acid is replaced by another, and this amino acid happens to be in the part of the molecule that is not on the outside of the red cell membrane, we call this 'Weak D'. Because there is no change to the molecule on the

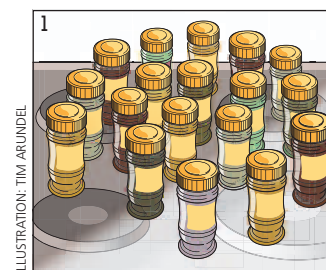
are transfused with normal Rh positive blood, then their immune system can recognise this protein as 'foreign', and can sometimes produce an anti-D. The diagrams below show how Partial D and Weak D work at the red cell level.

Let's put it this way

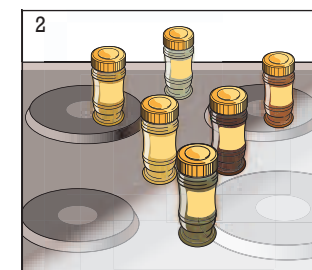
Malcolm Needs, reference service manager, is an expert in blood groups. He has an unusual way of explaining the concept of Weak and Partial D.

"Imagine I have three cooker tops, and the tops represent the red cell membrane.

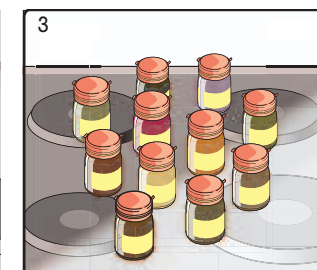
"The first top (1) has many bottles of herbs and spices on it (representing the D antigen). This



1. Normal Rh positive red cell, with herbs and spices representing normal D antigens.



2. Weak D red cell, with fewer D antigens; such an individual would be considered Rh positive.



3. Partial D red cell, which has different D antigens.

outside of the red cell membrane, the immune system of people with Weak D does not recognise true Rh positive blood as foreign when it is transfused to such people, so will not be stimulated to make anti-D.

If, however, a particular amino acid is replaced by another, and this amino acid happens to be in one of the external loops, then the protein is different to the normal Rh positive protein. Such individuals have a 'Partial D'. If such individuals

is the situation with the normal Rh positive red cell.

"The second cooker top (2) has fewer of these bottles. This is the situation with the Weak D red cell. There are fewer antigens, but they are identical in shape to the normal D antigens, and so this individual's immune system will not recognise the normal D antigens as 'foreign'.

"The third cooker top (3) has herb and spice bottles that are entirely a different shape. These

as 'foreign', and can produce an anti-D."

Malcolm adds that true Rh negatives would have no herb or spice bottles at all!

Weak D individuals are always treated as Rh positive, whereas Partial D individuals are treated as Rh positive when they are donating blood, but as Rh negative when receiving blood – which may explain why some of you appear to have a blood group that changes. ●



Malcolm Needs in his blood referencing laboratory



Back behind the wheel

Classic car enthusiast Richard Huelin was determined to drive again after a near fatal accident two years ago

In September 2009, Richard was travelling in a 1968 Ford Cortina to the Cholmondeley classic car show when he and his friend, Michael Smith, were involved in a head-on hit and run collision that left them both trapped in the vehicle. Richard had multiple injuries including two broken ankles.

"It took three operations – each lasting more than four hours – to put me back together, and surgeons inserted several plates,

nails and pins to fix my bones in place," says Richard. "I lost a huge amount of blood after the accident, and the blood products I received undoubtedly saved my life. I do not know just how much blood I received but I was told that the blood I lost on both the day of the accident and at the time of the second operation was life threatening."

It took three months before Richard was able to walk a little. "I took my first steps on

Christmas Day 2009 in front of my wife, Karen, my brother, my daughters and my sons-in-law. It was only a few short steps but they were momentous ones and only possible thanks to the surgeons, the nursing staff and the wonderful selfless generosity of those who gave blood."

Still an enthusiast

The severity of his injuries means that Richard will always have some pain getting about and can't walk

"It took three operations – each lasting more than four hours – to put me back together... the blood products I received undoubtedly saved my life"

far. But with the aid of a walking stick, he can now manage short distances.

Still a classic car enthusiast, Richard bought a 1963 Wolseley 1500 last year. "Michael and I decided to put the ordeal behind us and drive to the Cholmondeley show. We went by exactly the same route; it did concentrate the mind somewhat, but once achieved we were glad that we managed to do it and get there safely. Going there helped to lay the ghost."

Always thankful

Richard says he will never forget the generosity of everyone who helped him. "Every day is a day a blood donor has given back to me. I would like to thank all those people who give blood unreservedly every day. They have done a wonderful thing for me and I am forever in their debt. I will never completely overcome my injuries as the damage to my legs was very severe. I'm just glad I am still able to walk and I am still here." ●



How is my blood used?

You might think that blood is mainly used in accidents and emergencies; in fact anaemia treatments account for the single largest demand for blood.

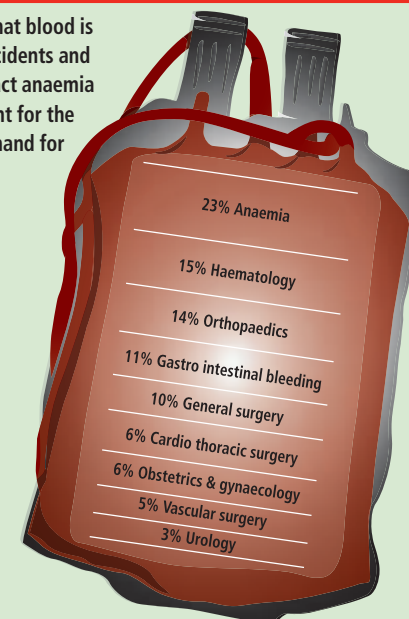


ILLUSTRATION: TIM ARUNDEL

"The change in transfusion has been incredible"

Q Tell us about your role as a transfusion laboratory manager

A I manage three laboratories for a large hospital trust based in Oxford. The labs are situated at three separate hospitals 30 miles apart (John Radcliffe Hospital and Churchill Hospital in Oxford and Horton General Hospital based in Banbury). The main roles of the labs are to test patient samples and provide blood products for patients. It's a very busy department, issuing up to 200 units of blood products a day. We never close and no two days are ever the same. I manage the day to

"I get a lot of satisfaction in knowing that we have helped save someone's life or helped ensure they have a better life"

day activities of the laboratory as well as looking towards the future and how we can continue to meet the needs of the patients.

Q What did you do before taking this role?

A I've worked in hospital laboratories since I left university. I trained in London, moving to Oxford in 2000 to take up my current role.

Keeping on top of the supply of blood products for three major hospitals is all in a day's work for transfusion laboratory manager, Julie Staves



Q What does your typical day involve?

A I'm usually in work by 7am. The first job is to catch up with the staff who have been working overnight and then check on our blood product stocks and order what we need from our local NHSBT centre. I then catch up on office work.

The routine day starts at 8.30, when the rest of the day staff arrive. This means checking everyone is here and assigning people with the day's tasks.

Once the day has got going I can be doing a number of things –

Julie at work in one of the laboratories. She and her team issue up to 200 units of blood products every day

from handling complex and difficult investigations on patient samples, through liaising with medical staff and having meetings.

Most of my days are very varied and my priority is always the smooth running of the laboratories, so there is always a continuous supply of blood.

Q What projects have you worked on that patients may be benefiting from currently?

A The biggest project I've worked on over a number of years is the development of an electronic blood transfusion

system. This is a system which uses handheld computers to ensure patients receive the correct blood products. We first started working on this in 2001 and it is now in all clinical areas of our trust and is available commercially. We know it has prevented patients receiving blood which was intended for another patient, and will have saved lives.

Q What changes have you seen in blood transfusion practice since you started working in this role?

A The change in blood transfusion in the last ten years has been incredible. Hospital laboratories are now covered by UK legislation which has helped improve standards. The introduction of a faster method of providing blood for patients has meant that most blood can be available in ten minutes.

The biggest development is the increased use of IT; being involved from the early days of using IT to ensure safe transfusions has been very satisfying, but the real benefit is the

reduced risk to patients.

Q Which projects are you currently working on and how will this help patients in the future?

A I'm currently working on a project looking at how NHSBT distributes blood products to hospitals. It is in the early stages but will hopefully result in more products being available in the location that they are required, and when a patient needs a product there will be a greater chance it is available quickly, rather than it having to be transported from elsewhere.

Within my Trust, we are looking at how blood products are used and how medical staff decide if a transfusion is needed. We hope to change the electronic system so it can advise medical staff about the appropriate use of blood products

and prevent blood from being used unnecessarily.

Q What would you say is the best part of your job?

A It's probably the variety and the fact that it gives me the opportunity to make a real difference to how transfusion practice is developing. I get a lot of satisfaction in knowing that we have helped save someone's life or helped ensure they will have a better life.

Q What would you say to people to encourage them to sign up to become blood donors?

A Blood is a very precious and life-saving gift. It is needed for lots of different reasons and for all types of patients. We need to transfuse people from the smallest premature baby to the 90-year-old who has fallen over and broken their hip. I'd like to thank all the donors on behalf of the patients we treat and I'd like to ask those of you who can to consider being a donor; it is a small thing to do but your gift could help to save the lives of up to three individuals. ●





Our doctor, Sue Barnes, answers questions about platelets

Platelets

blood test to screen for white cell antibodies which can develop following a pregnancy and may cause a reaction in some patients.

be connected to a cell separating machine. As the name of the machine suggests, your platelets are separated from your red cells and your red cells are then returned back to you during the donation process. Your bone marrow will naturally replace the donated platelets within 48-72 hours.

Q What are platelets and what is a platelet donor?

Platelets are tiny cells in the blood which help it to clot when a blood vessel is damaged. Platelet donors donate platelets instead of whole blood using a special machine called a cell separator.

Q Why are donated platelets important?

Platelet transfusions are often needed for very sick patients whose bone marrow is not working properly, including cancer or leukaemia sufferers undergoing chemotherapy. A patient with a low platelet count can be at risk of severe bleeding and may need many transfusions of platelets.

Q Who can be a platelet donor?

You could become a platelet donor if you are between 17 and 65 years old. You do not need to have given any form of donation before. If you are over 65 you need to have given blood or platelets at least once before and, if you are over 70, you must have given a whole donation within the last two years. Men are most likely to be suitable platelet donors because they usually have a higher blood volume than women. Female donors are also welcome, but they need to have a second

Q How do you donate platelets and how long does it take?

Platelets are collected at 24 of our donor centres across the country; see www.blood.co.uk/platelets to find your nearest centre. The process takes about 90 minutes but donors should allow about two hours to include the screening process and rest period.

Q How often can you donate platelets?

Platelet donors are encouraged to donate regularly, at least once a month and more if possible.

Q Is it safe to give platelets regularly?

When you donate platelets you will

Q Do I need to have a particular blood group to donate platelets?

Platelet donors are needed across all blood groups; however A negative platelets are particularly needed as these can be given to patients with other blood groups.

Q How can I become a platelet donor?

For more information about becoming a platelet donor please call the National Donor Helpline on 0300 123 23 23 or visit www.blood.co.uk/platelets

Platelet donor do's and don'ts

- Platelet donors must refrain from donating for five days if they have taken any products containing aspirin. The chemical composition of aspirin impairs the ability of platelets, a component of blood that helps to prevent bleeding, to function properly. We recommend you consult your GP before stopping or starting any medication.
- Normal regular meals before donating are vital for maintaining blood sugars and warding off lightheadedness – but avoid fatty foods, the acids in them can 'clog up' the platelets meaning they can't be used.
- The whole platelet donation process takes around 90 minutes so it might be worthwhile bringing along a book or MP3 player to help pass the time.
- Drink plenty of water before, during and after your donation to keep your fluid levels up.

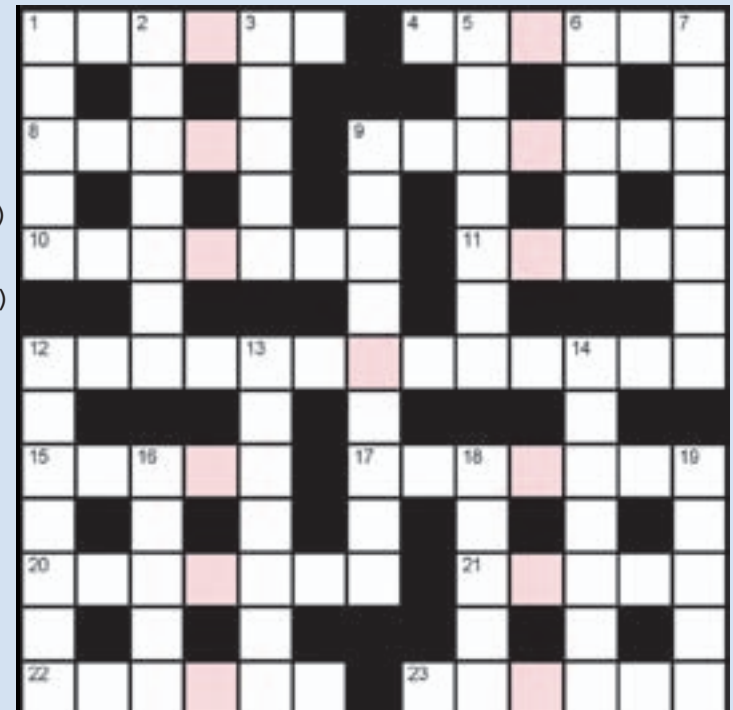
Complete the crossword. Taken left to right row by row the letters in the tinted squares spell out what blood donors can do. Send the phrase on a postcard or letter together with your name, address and daytime phone number to: Crossword Competition, The Donor, NBS, Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5BG. You could win an "Amazing" NHSBT prize. Answers and the winner's name will be in the next issue. All entries must be received by 31st January 2012.

ACROSS

- Bray (6)
- Belief in existence of God (6)
- Objects of worship (5)
- Flighty young woman of 1920s (7)
- Prickly plant (7)
- Spicy sauce (5)
- School of music (13)
- Pulped food (5)
- Lean back (7)
- Person being taught a skill (7)
- Of sheep (5)
- That is to say (6)
- Founder of Methodism (6)

DOWN

- Lifting device (5)
- Feeling (7)
- Item of value (5)
- Receiver with earpieces (7)
- Drive (5)
- Kent resort (7)
- Poetry without conventional rhyme or rhythm (4,5)
- Windlass on ship (7)
- Interminable (7)
- First letter of word (7)
- Domain (5)
- Finish (5)
- Foe (5)



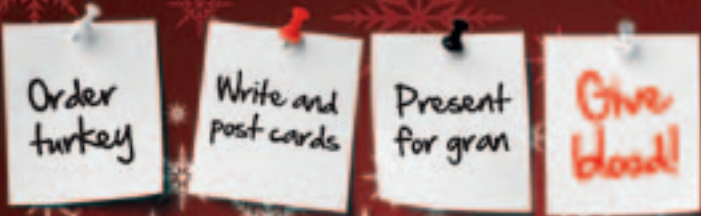
WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations to Campbell Boggon, from Abbeydale, Gloucester, who correctly answered last issue's crossword.

The correct answer was: CANNES.

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTION





Remembered all the important things to do this Christmas?

Save a life – give blood



INFORMATION

Just call our 24 hour **Donor Helpline** and staff will answer your queries on all aspects of giving blood.

Remember, you can call the Helpline to tell us if you have moved house or changed employers!

DON'T FORGET information is also available on our website.

0300 123 23 23

www.blood.co.uk

If you are not a donor, please enrol now. Fill out the coupon below, place it in an envelope and send it to NHS Blood and Transplant, FREEPOST RRZG-KUKB-EUBE, 500 North Bristol Park, Northway, Filton, Bristol BS34 7QH, or call 0300 123 23 23.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss	SURNAME
FIRST NAME	DATE OF BIRTH DD / MM / YY
ADDRESS	
POSTCODE	
DAYTIME PHONE No	MOBILE
EMAIL	

To give blood you need to be in good health, aged 17 to 65 and weigh over 7st 12lbs/50kg.

I would like to join the NHS Blood Donor Register as someone who may be contacted and would be prepared to donate blood. I understand that the NHS Blood & Transplant (NHSBT) or its partners may phone, write or otherwise contact me with details of local donor sessions. I agree to the NHSBT holding my personal details on their donor database and processing this information as necessary for the proper administration of the NHSBT. MO6

