

## Information that we get from Other Members of the Public

***From time to time*** members of the public contact us with what they think is important information about one of our blood donors. This usually concerns the callers' worries about the individual donors' behaviour – things like current or previous drug use are typical, which the caller thinks may be important for us to know. This poses a real problem – we need to act on the information, just in case there is something in it: our overriding concern has to be for the safety of people getting transfusions, even though this will always cause distress to the donor being reported on. We do our best to resolve the matter in a confidential, non-judgemental and timely manner, but this is always a very difficult situation for a donor to be placed in.

### ***What happens next?***

#### *We always*

- contact the donor to inform them that such information has been received
- invite him/her to meet a doctor in the IBTS to discuss the matter fully
- lock the donor's file on the IBTS computer system so that they can't donate again until the issue has been sorted out
- reinstate the donor on the system as appropriate once it's resolved
- act in accordance with the strict requirements of the Data Protection legislation with regard to the information.

#### *We don't*

- Disclose the identity of the person calling us – this is controversial and often frustrating to the donor. We accept that sometimes these calls are made to us for wrong reasons by the caller – to cause nuisance or harm to the donor for some reason. However there is no way that we can make that judgement in individual cases, and we've adopted the policy of treating the caller and the call neutrally. We apologise that this is almost always very frustrating for the donor in question. We're trying to ensure that the national blood supply is as safe as we can make it, so we maintain the confidential link with the public in these matters. It's not a perfect solution, but it's the best we can do in the circumstances.

#### *We do*

- appreciate the cooperation that we get from donors during these sometimes difficult follow-ups on these calls
- reimburse vouched travel expenses or standard mileage costs incurred by donors who are contacted in this way.

If you have any queries please contact **freephone 1800 60 20 20** (9a.m. - 4p.m. Monday to Friday).