**Donor Ethnicity**

**Why does the IBTS want to know my ethnic origin?**

By knowing your ethnic background more specific typing of your blood can be performed to identify donors that are rare within the Irish donor population. This in turn means more targeted donations for patients in Irish hospitals with conditions that are not typically associated with the ethnic Irish population, such as Sickle Cell Disease (SCD).

**Where will this information be recorded?**

This will be entered using a code on our data base (eProgesa). It will not be printed on the paperwork you complete on clinic. All information from donors is treated with confidentiality.

**Do I have to provide an ethnic origin?**

No, you can simply say when asked *I would rather not say* and this will be updated on your donor record and will not impact on your being able to donate blood in the future.

**Who could benefit from this?**

The shortage of certain Rh groups and B positive blood means patients with SCD are often treated with O negative blood – the only blood type that can safely be given to anyone. Ideally patients should receive their own blood group whenever possible. Many patients being treated in Irish hospitals will benefit from this, including patients with SCD, antenatal patients, those who have cancer, or who need blood for surgery or trauma.

A broader donor base will improve the overall match for transfusion for patients with specific needs and will give better outcomes with medical treatment.

**What additional testing will be done and will I be notified of any results that may affect my health?**

Certain blood groups are more associated with different ethnicities so testing will be focused on these blood groups once ethnicity is known.

Some donors will also be tested for Sickle Cell Trait as outlined below. It is not recommended that patients with SCD receive blood from donors with Sickle Cell Trait, so we need to know this information. If you have Sickle Cell Trait we will write to you and let you know. If you would like more information please ask a member of staff.

**Ethnicity Codes: To which ethnic group do you consider that you belong?**

**Section 1**

White Irish/Irish Traveller/Any other white ethnicity

1. White

**Section 2**

Mixed

**002** White and Black

**003** White and Asian

**004** Any other mixed/multiple ethnic group

Asian or Asian Irish

**005** Indian Sub-Continent

**006** Japanese

**007** Any other Asian background

Black/African/Caribbean/Black Irish

**008** Black

Other Ethnic Categories

**009** Arab

**010** Latinx

**011** Any other ethnicity

**012** Unknown

**013** Not disclosed

**If you select a code in section 2 your sample/donation will be automatically tested for Sickle Cell Trait. Donations from other codes may also be tested in response to patient needs. If you test positive we will write to you and let you know. Please ask if you would like more information.**