# 8th December 2019

# IBTS urges donors to ensure that blood is available for patients over the Christmas period

The IBTS is concerned that blood supplies will be difficult leading in to and over the Christmas/New Year period and is urging donors to make a special effort to give blood in the weeks leading up to and over the Christmas season.

“From December 9th to January 8th the IBTS requires more than 12,000 donors to attend our clinics to maintain the blood supply. To facilitate this, the IBTS is running 30 additional clinics on the Sundays and Fridays before and during the Christmas period, to ensure we can meet patient demand,” said Operations Director, Paul McKinney.

“The lead into the Christmas/New Year festivities presents significant challenges in sustaining the blood supply. Over the Christmas period we are losing 45 clinics and many of these fall on days which are traditionally our busiest days for collecting blood.

“That is why we are arranging extra clinics on Sundays 22nd December, 29th December and January 5th, and Fridays December 27th and January 3rd. These clinics are also vital for collecting blood for young babies who can only receive blood 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.”

Clinic details and the eligibility quiz can be accessed at www.giveblood.ie.

**ENDS**

**Note to Editor - Some facts about blood**

**1 in 4 people will require a blood transfusion**

**Only 3% of the eligible population are active blood donors**

**Blood lasts just 35 days**

**Blood for new borns must be less than 5 days old**

**Donors with O negative blood, universal donors, represent 8% of the population but are responsible for 15% of all blood issued to hospitals.**

We need 3,000 blood donations a week to keep hospitals supplied