

# Blood Line

The Voluntary Blood Donation Journal

Promoting  
Voluntary  
Blood Donation

2007 | 3



## **Club 25: A strategy to recruit voluntary donors in Kerala**


*W*hat started as an initiative in Zimbabwe to recruit blood donors, was developed further in South Africa and now has become an inspiration for the rest of the world. We in Kerala will do well to learn from this outstanding example of citizen action yielding great benefits for society.

By tapping the young, the strategy targets the healthy portion of the population which will yield the maximum number of qualified donors. These donors will also remain active for the longest period, since they will be able to donate for the next 25-30 years at least.

Once Club 25 becomes established in high schools and colleges, this will ensure that every batch of students leaving these institutions will be indoctrinated in the values of voluntary blood donation. This will ensure that the pipeline of donors will never run dry.

Once a sufficient number of donors come forward regularly, they can demand important and long overdue changes in the way Blood Transfusion Services are run in the states and the country. This is what happened in many countries, and has led to the establishment of safe Blood Transfusion Services run on modern lines. It will also enable donors to have a greater say in the way these services are managed.

I look forward to 2007 seeing Club 25 being established on a firm footing in Kerala.

  
**C Balagopal**  
Managing Director  
Terumo Penpol Ltd.

# What is a Voluntary Blood Donation?

The definition of what is a voluntary non remunerated blood donation have been outlined in a Council of Europe Publication” as well as by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Both definitions are very similar.

The Council of Europe definition states “Voluntary unpaid donation shall mean the donation of blood or blood components by a person of his/her free will and without receiving payment in cash or in kind in return which could be considered a substitute for money. This also includes time off work reasonably required for donation and travel. small tokens , gratuities, refreshments and the reimbursement of direct costs and direct travel expenses are compatible with the voluntary and unpaid donation of blood.

The definition should also be considered in the context of the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) Code of Ethics. It states, blood donation including hematopoietic tissues for transplantation shall, in all circumstances, be voluntary and non-remunerated: no coercion should be brought to bear on the donor.

A recent international forum on paid vs unpaid donor clearly shows the range of interpretations that occur between countries. Even in developed countries there are variations in procedures, although most now are almost entirely dependent on unpaid voluntary blood donors.

In India , a volunteer donor may be simply one who gives blood voluntarily and may still be remunerated in some way, either directly or indirectly. Direct ways include the provision of a substantial meal and assistance with transport. Indirect ways include time off work, extra holidays, free blood when the donor or their relatives should be in need of it. The borderline between an incentive and a payment is often blurred.

Many persons give a voluntary donation when blood donor camps or mobile collects are organized. At these times there may be considerable peer, competitive and emotional pressure to donate and although the donation may be voluntary ,it is not common for such donors to return. In some countries even replacement donors ie persons giving blood to supply the transfusion needs of a designated are classified as voluntary donors. Armed Forces personnel donors are often classed as voluntary even though some degree of coercion is not uncommon.

Thus statistics for the percentage of voluntary donors often do not provide full data that can be relied on. If the ISBT criteria are observed ,there are few countries that have a high percentage of truly voluntary non remunerated (unpaid) blood donors

and perhaps fewer still that have a blood supply system based on repeat donors. The latter reflect a key performance indicator (KPI) for blood services ,and generally only blood services with a very high volunteer rate have a high percentage of these repeat donors.

It should be the aim of all blood services to aim to achieve a 100% voluntary non remunerated blood donor panel. This is the objective , but in countries with limitations in finance, education and expertise, this is not easy to achieve although some countries such as “Nepal” and Thailand have been able to get close to the desired objective.

In the past, the immediate need for blood was so urgent that authorities often took the line of least resistance and set up systems that quickly provided blood donors. This resulted in the establishment of commercial blood donor systems which now have been shown to provide only sub-optimally safe blood and in limited quantities. Most countries have now ceased or legislated against such systems of blood donation.

The next step was to place the onus of donor recruitment on the patient in an effort to meet his/her blood requirements. This resulted in friends and relatives being under pressure to give blood at the request of the patient ie replacement donors. These were often relatively unwilling donors who give blood under a form of coercion. It can result in people coming forward to give blood who had been recruited financially by the patient or his/her family , concealing the fact that they were in realty very much like commercial donors. Many abuses result from such a system, and scientifically there are good reasons why blood from close relatives should not be used routinely for blood transfusion .Unfortunately this system is perpetuated in many hospitals today.

It is too easy for Hospitals to continue with a system that places the onus of recruitment of blood donors on the patient, who is therefore saddled with a double load of problems ie the disease process and a need to obtain blood donors. Such a system is

easy for hospitals but is less safe than a volunteer system, as much data demonstrates that infectious marker rates are nearly always higher in such donors than in truly voluntary donors. Blood donor arrangements of this type need to be phased out as quickly as possible in favor of the development of a truly voluntary donor system. This will be initially more expensive for a hospital as it requires improved staffing and facilities but in the long run will produce a system that has committed regular high quality volunteer blood donors.

Although voluntary blood donations were encouraged in many hospitals they were often commenced without a thoughtfully planned program that incorporated what was really required. Emphasis was often placed on the rewards of becoming a blood donor and major incentives were offered such as time off work, extra holidays. Little efforts were made to improve donor facilities or to treat voluntary donors with the respect they deserved .The result was a poor response viz donors more interested in rewards rather than being of assistance to their community. The problem is that once such a reward system is commenced ,it is quite difficult to reduce the offered benefits without affecting the blood supply. Without an understanding of the basic motivating factors that underlie a society and the altruistic factors that can be used to influence prospective donors to donate blood, voluntary donor recruitment programs can be ineffective.

The roadblocks to achieving a 100 % voluntary blood donor service are thus many. Perhaps the main one is the lack of planning by politicians and the lack of national policies on blood transfusion. Until governments take a real interest in this subject and provide at least basic funding, blood services are greatly handicapped in trying to achieve their goals.

*Extracts from Review Article on VBD in Asean Journal Transfusion Science by Graeme Woodfield, Specialist in Transfusion Medicine, Molecular Medicine and Pathology, The University of Auckland, New Zealand.*

## World Health Organization's Guide Line for Appropriate use of Blood:

- Transfusion of ‘only one unit” of blood to an adult is not at all necessary
- Asking for fresh blood every now and then is unscientific
- There is nothing called fresh blood for transfusion
- It takes about four hours to test blood after collection. The so called ‘fresh blood” is often untested blood, which may be dangerous for the patient and may even cause death
- Use of the blood less than three days old should be avoided as there is an increased risk of transmission of viral infections from fresh blood

## Steps which should be followed for getting blood from blood banks -

- In 83 % case blood need can be spelt out well in advance.
- One should contact the blood bank with adequate lead period before the actual requirement.
- Blood requisition and blood samples should be tendered to the blood bank counter every time blood is needed.
- One has to approach the hospital blood bank first and if right type of blood is not available, then District or Central Blood Bank has to be approached.
- In non-emergency cases it is prudent to report to the blood bank counter by 11.00 am on working day.
- In Govt blood bank one can keep the blood reserved after testing ,three days before the actual requirement.
- While taking the blood bag from the blood bank the cross match slip must be collected.
- No charge has to be paid if the blood is collected against the donor card.
- In case the blood bank charges any service charge a receipt has to be obtained. Getting the receipt is the duty of every Citizen.

Source: NACO

## Who can donate blood?

- Age between 18 and 60 years
- Body weight at least 45 kg
- Must not be suffering from any major ailment (during the last one year)
- Must not have donated blood during the last three months
- Hemoglobin contents in blood must be normal
- Donor considers own health standard/ habits fit for donating blood

## Inauguration of IMA CLUB 25 Unit

IMA Students wing inaugurated the Club 25 unit on February 24, 2007. Students from various colleges in the City participated in the function.

## Announcing World Blood Donor Day June 14, 2007

Towards 100% voluntary blood donation: this year, like every year, World Blood Donor Day will be commemorated on 14 June in a global celebration of the millions of people throughout the world



who give their blood on a voluntary, unpaid basis to save the lives of those in need. The day aims to raise awareness of the need for safe blood, to thank and honor those blood donors who make transfusion possible and to encourage regular blood donation by suitable donors.

World Blood Donor Day 2007 will focus on commitment: commitment from healthy individuals to become regular voluntary unpaid blood donors, commitment from existing voluntary donors to continue to donate regularly and commitment by blood transfusion services and partner organizations to provide the highest standards of care at every stage of the transfusion process - from the collection of blood from the donor to its transfusion to the patient.

### NOBLE GESTURE OF TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES, TECHNOPARK-KUDOS TO THE STRONG CONTRIBUTIONS OF TCS FOR PROMOTING VOLNTARY BLOOD DONATION!

We thank Mary Ninan, S Krishna Kumar and the repeat regular Donors of TCS for promoting voluntary blood donation. TCS had organized 8 blood donation camps from October 2006 till February 2007. Great Work! Keep it up!

## CLUB 25 Meeting:



Repeat regular donors from various Colleges in TVM District including Professional Colleges attended the Club 25 meeting organized by TERUMO PENPOL Limited and Hotel South Park.

Dr. Shylaja Chopelle, Dr. Lincoln Chowdhury from IIITMK and Dr Usha Kandaswamy, Medical Social Welfare Officer of SCTIMST spoke to Students about Club 25. The points discussed in the meeting are given below:

- The Club 25 members will donate blood 25 times before they reach 25 years of age
- Units of Club 25 will be formed in their respective Colleges
- Club 25 shall arrange 1 or 2 blood donation camps in a year with their

volunteers

- Trained volunteers of Club 25 will organize blood donation awareness session in their colleges
- Club 25 will maintain the donor database and help the people of the locality in respect of rare blood group need
- The trained volunteers of Club 25 will go to nearby schools by appointment to conduct awareness session for High School and Higher Secondary Students with the help of IEC Materials
- Club 25 shall find a responsible, dedicated and committed person to drive the programme
- Will support the blood centers for promoting Voluntary Blood Donation

### Talking about Club 25



**Dr. Usha Kandaswamy**  
Medical Social Welfare Officer  
of SCTIMST Blood Bank

**Dr. Shylaja Chopelle**  
Sr. Project Officer, IIITMK

**Dr. Lincoln Chowdhury**  
Sr. Project Officer,  
IIITMK

## Blood Donation Camp Organized By Myladi Residents Association

A Blood Donation Camp was organized by Myladi Residents Association in association with Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute For Medical Sciences and Technology. Dr. Jaisy Mathai the Chief Blood Transfusion Officer of SCTIMST made a speech on the importance of Voluntary Blood Donation. The Blood donation camp was inaugurated by Mr. C Padmakumar the Executive Director of TERUMO PENPOL Limited.



## Blood Donation by PTM Group of Institutions- Marthurkonam

23 donors donated blood at PTM Group of Institutions at a blood donation camp organized by PTM Group of Institutions and Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences. An awareness session on voluntary blood donation was also organized. Dr. Usha Kandaswamy Medical Social Welfare Officer of SCTIMST delivered a thought provoking speech on "The role of Society in promoting voluntary blood donation". *Byju S Mony a regular donor who has donated blood 52 times delivered a motivational speech. Thanks to the great work of Byju S Mony who is a Blood donor motivator and regular donor for taking initiative to organize this camp.*

## Thanksgiving Message To the Repeat Regular Voluntary Blood Donors

Thank you very much for your noble act of Voluntary Blood Donation. Your blood will be used to help patients who badly need it. We hope your experience of blood donation was pleasant and that you will be encouraged to donate again.

To establish a transfusion service, dependent totally on voluntary blood donors, to meet the entire blood need of the country or the region, a good donor base is absolutely necessary. Building up a good donor base is not an easy task and retaining the donor base is equally difficult. To maintain a donor base, recruitment of new donors and retention of the old donors are absolutely essential.

There are people who do not donate blood after their first blood donation and remain one time donor for the rest of their lives. Retention of old donors is equally important along with the recruitment of new donors. The reason is simple. These pool of eligible donors like you have already overcome superstitions, taboos and fear complex for donating blood and

therefore, the dropping out of such donors weakens donor base.

Requirement of blood far surpasses the availability. If only 2% of our population donates, we will be self sufficient in the matter of blood requirement. Committed donors are vital to the functioning of blood transfusion services. Regular donations are needed not only because of the constant need for blood but also because blood has limited storage life.

The entire work of donor motivators or organizers is lost if a donor donates blood once and then does not return for future donation. We request you to donate blood once in three months.

Thanks to the generosity of you, countless people have received the precious gift of life, while others are able to enjoy a much-improved quality of life through regular treatment with blood and blood products

We would like to thank you once again for your noble act and request you to spread the message to your friends and family.

## Announcing World Health Day 2007

### Curtain Raiser Events planned for World Health Day by Club 25 Units of various Colleges, College Union Blood Donor's Forum, (Medical College, Trivandrum) and Terumo Penpol Ltd.,

- Elocution Competition on "Community Service Through Blood Donation"
- Panel Discussion on "Promotion of Club 25 at Educational Institutions"
- Talk Shows on VBD in popular television channels by club 25 members
- Broadcasting through the media about the activities planned by Club 25
- Club 25 members will be invited to inform their name, blood group, address and telephone number. The information will be saved in the computer as a database for blood donor networking.
- Act of giving blood by Club 25 members and sharing their experience with their friends.
- Youth Blood Donation Camp from 01-07 April 2007 - with the aim to build up the networking and sharing experiences in blood donation activities amongst youths as well as to create a youth movement to propel the advance towards 100% voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors in Trivandrum.
- Display of VBD Banners at prominent places designed by College of Fine Arts Students and inviting passer by people to write slogans on VBD.
- Visit to Professional Colleges by Club 25 members and to create an awareness on VBD
- Skit on VBD
- VBD Film Show.

## Blood Donation By Mr. Tomohiko Nozoe



Mr. Tomohiko Nozoe a Japanese Native aged 44 years old donated blood at SCTIMST. He is a regular donor at Japan. He has donated 30 times in Japan One thing that remained constant was Mr. Nozoe's commitment to donating blood. Today, even at Trivandrum, that commitment continues.

Nozoe proudly states that his blood saves 4 lives! :Red cells-Treatment for Anemia (Thalassemia), White Blood Cells-Treatment of cancer, Platelets-Bleeding, Treatment of Cancer. Plasma-Clotting, Maintains blood volume, Maintains blood pressure"Over the years I've helped a lot of people, and that gives me a good feeling," says Nozoe

## Blood Donation Camp Organized by PHC & NSS Karayogam-Punnamkulam

The Public Health Center and NSS Karayogam of Punnamkulam in association with Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences had organized a Blood Donation Camp and an awareness session on blood donation. Dr. N Sathyabhama, Blood Transfusion Officer of SCTIMST spoke to the audience about the benefits of repeat regular voluntary blood donation. Dr. Vipin Kumar of PHC and Byju S Mony who are regular donors shared their experience.

Manorama News Channel, ACV and Mathrubhumi Newspaper had given a coverage of the camp.

### Office Bearers of Club 25 Blood Donation Unit ,Government Arts and Science College, Kanjiramkulam, Trivandrum Dist.

Adharsh Krishnan	-	President
Shameer	-	Vice President
Sheeja R	-	General Secretary
Deepak K V	-	Secretary
Rejitha R A	-	Member
Koshy E	-	Member

Mr Subash - NSS Program Officer will be the Coordinator

### Office Bearers of Club 25 Blood Donation Unit , All Saint's College, Trivandrum

Anjana	-	President
Shobha V	-	Secretary
Anusree Chandran	-	Treasurer