

## **Guidance: Blood Drive Organising**

Well done for talking the important decision to run blood drives in your community.

Whilst many people feel sad about the situation, very few people actually do anything to change the problem. So you are one of a very select group of social agents - individuals that take action to improve society.

This guidance will help you to run your first blood drive. As you grow in confidence and experience, you will be able to modify the steps to better reflect the needs of your community and the resources you have at hand.

We are all learning from each other and something you discover could assist an Action On Blood member in a distant country. So, please, let us know how it went. How many people attended the drive? How many donations did you collect? What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them? How did you raise the finances to cover the drive? What worked really well and what would you do differently?

Good luck!

### **CONTENTS**

1. Get your facts right	2
2. Choose a suitable host organisation	2
3. Get the host organisation on board	3
4. Donor marketing and sign up	3
5. Raise awareness to the members	3
6. Confirm the practical requirements	4
7. Run the drive	4
8. End the drive	7

### 1. Get your facts right

**To do:  
Research  
facts about  
blood  
availability**

The thought of people in your community needlessly dying because people do not donate blood voluntarily can make you angry and upset. People are inspired by others that speak and act with passion and emotion. However, you still need to back this up with real, hard evidence. So you have to do your homework and get relevant facts that affect your community and the people in it.

You must know who is impacted by a lack of blood and in what circumstances people may need a blood transfusion. You should understand what happens when people don't get the blood they need in time. You must have a good grasp of how big the problem is for your community.

Use recent figures that you have taken from reputable sources. The World Health Organisation's Global Database on Blood Safety (GDBS) ([https://www.who.int/bloodsafety/global\\_database/en/](https://www.who.int/bloodsafety/global_database/en/)) is a good starting point. You can then check your country's Department of Health's report.

For instance, in 2013, according to the WHO's Global status report on blood safety and availability, 2016:

- The UK collected 2,110,117 units of blood, all of which were voluntary blood donations.
- Ghana collected 160,295 units of blood. 52,897 units were voluntary blood donations and 107,398 were collected from family replacement donors
- Nigeria collected 125,101 units of blood. 53,764 units were voluntary blood donations and 71,337 were collected from family replacement donors. However, the data given are from NBTS and Lagos State Blood Transfusion Service only and exclude commercial providers.
- United States of America collected 5,611,301 units of blood. 5,610,978 units were voluntary blood donations and 310 were collected from family replacement donors. However, it was estimated that the number of blood donations reported covered just 60% of the national data.
- Uganda collected 202,935 units of blood, all of which were voluntary blood donations.

### 2. Choose a suitable host organisation

**To do:  
Contact your  
LBS**

A host organisation is a club, church, mosque, company, school or other organisation that will let you hold the drive on their premises. They will market the drive to their members and allow you to talk to them about the need for voluntary blood donation and the upcoming drive. A supportive host organisation is very important to the success of your drive.

**To do: Select  
a host  
organisation**

First talk to your Local Blood Service (LBS) about what their criteria is for a suitable host venue. Some LBSs will not come out if the expected number of blood donors will be small. This is because it is very expensive to engage a mobile drive unit - they have to pay for the medical staff, the equipment and the transport. They will also have criteria about the type of venue, distance from their facilities and available space.

With their requirements in hand, you can start thinking about suitable host venues and organisations. Start with organisations where you know the main decision-maker well or that you are a member of.

### **3. Get the host organisation on board**

**To do: Make arrangements with the host organisation**

Book a meeting with the key decision-maker to talk about your blood drive proposal. At the meeting, explain the blood and organ donor shortage affecting your community and how voluntary blood donation is key to saving lives. This is a good place to hit them with your passion, commitment and good grasp of the facts.

Then you have to ask for

a) A specific date and time to raise awareness about the need for voluntary blood donation amongst their members. This is important as you need to market the drive to the people you hope will become voluntary blood donors.

For many, it will be the first time that they have ever been confronted with the horrible impact of insufficient blood supply or been asked to donate.

- b) A specific date and time to hold the blood drive. You should make this date within 2 weeks of the awareness raising presentation so that you can capitalise on the initial enthusiasm.
- c) A contact at the host organisation that you can work with to ensure the presentation and drive run smoothly. This person should be good at encouraging others to donate, be well known in the organisation and be good at organising.

### **4. Donor marketing and sign up**

**To do: Provide the host organisation with marketing support and guidance**

Let the organisation know that, whilst the medical side of the drive will be taken care of by the LBS and you will take care of the operational side, they will be responsible for providing the face-to-face marketing that will make the drive a great success and signing up donors ahead of the drive.

The key contact person will play a crucial role in motivating other members to sign up to donate. They will make arrangements for your presentation and will ensure members attend it. After the presentation, they should put up the posters you provide in good locations and should hand out your leaflets when talking to members one-on-one about the drive.

Talk with the host organisation about ways to make the drive enjoyable for their members. They may wish to provide additional snacks for those that participate in the blood drive. Or music, games and entertainment whilst donors wait for their turn.

### **5. Raise awareness to the members**

**To do: Present to the members and ask them to sign up to donate at the upcoming drive**

Do a short presentation (maximum 15 minutes) to the members of the host organisation about the need for the drive and what will happen on the day. It is good to show a video or deliver a slide show that contains lots of pictures. People are more interested in the human reason for donating and why you got involved in Action On Blood, than they are in hard facts and figures.

**To do: Send them the Action On Blood "Donor Sign Up" email**

If time and structure permits, allow time for people to ask you questions. Encourage them to ask any question, no matter how silly it may sound. If you don't know the answer to any question, be frank about it and tell them that you will find out and get back to them.

Make sure that you tell people the date of the drive and that you actually ask them to sign up to donate blood. Do not assume that they know that this is the purpose of the presentation.

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Send the key contact person the Action on Blood email for signing up potential donors. They can send this email to all their members for them to complete individually or they can complete the spreadsheet in the email and reply to Action On Blood.

Action On Blood collects all these details so that we can send reminder emails to them ahead of the drive, log their successful donation and ensure they are properly acknowledged for their selfless donation. We are constantly working on rewards for voluntary donors around the world. By signing your donors up to Action on Blood, you also ensure that they will benefit from any offers available to them

## 6. Confirm the practical requirements

**To do: Ensure both the LBS and host organisation are ready**

Ahead of the drive, ensure both the LBS and host organisation are ready. Double check that the venue meets the requirements of your LBS and that the date of the drive works for them. Your LBS may wish to inspect the site first. Inform them of how many donors you have signed up already. Confirm that they will be providing the post donation drink and snack. Check that there hasn't been any changes with the host organisation that will impact the drive.

## 7. Run the drive

**To do: Arrange the available space**

On the day of the drive, you will find that there is a great sense of nervous excitement and anticipation in the air. Some people will need friendly and playful cajoling to donate and may only do so after they have seen others do so first. We have found that capitalising on this party-like atmosphere is a great way to make blood donation a pleasurable activity.

There are typically 4 stages to a blood drive and each requires a separate section/ area:

1. Donor Questionnaire - Have chairs for donors to sit on. If you don't have tables, ensure you provide them with a writing board to rest on. This is a good place to set up your marketing stands and have your leaflets. You may wish to have a sample blood bag kit and 500ml bottle of water. These are useful to show new donors in order to prepare them for the collection and to help them visualise what a pint of blood looks like. You can set up your 'Pints Donated' board here to show how many pints have been donated so far. It really encourages those that have yet to donate.
2. Health screening - You may wish to have hospital screens to aid privacy.
3. Blood donation - The medical team will need access to a sink.
4. Recovery - You may wish to have comfortable chairs and a table to serve the recovery refreshments (and other food) from.

Organise the available space so that donors do not get confused about where to go or get mixed up with other donors who are at a different stage of their donation process.

What you will need

STATIONERY, BRANDING & CLOTHING:	
Tee shirts for donor staff	
Tee shirts for donor volunteers	

## **ACTION ON BLOOD**

<b>STATIONERY, BRANDING &amp; CLOTHING:</b>	
<b>Tee shirts for medical staff</b>	
<b>Lab coats for medical staff</b>	
<b>Donor labels</b>	
<b>Name tags</b>	
<b>Doc: Certificate</b>	
<b>Doc: Registration Record F1</b>	
<b>Doc: FAQ sheet</b>	
<b>Doc: To be retained by donor F4</b>	
<b>Doc: Excuses not to give blood leaflet</b>	
<b>Doc: Donor Questionnaire</b>	
<b>Pens for workers and donors</b>	
<b>Permanent marker</b>	
<b>Sellotape</b>	
<b>Easels</b>	
<b>A "Pints donated today" board to show drive progress</b>	
<b>Posters</b>	
<b>Main banners</b>	
<b>Pull up banners</b>	
<b>Writing boards to lean on</b>	
<b>REFRESHMENTS &amp; UTENSILS:</b>	
<b>Trays</b>	
<b>Serving spoons</b>	
<b>Serviettes</b>	
<b>Paper plates</b>	
<b>Toothpicks</b>	
<b>Kitchen towel</b>	
<b>Bin bag / carrier bags</b>	
<b>Bottles of water for workers and medical team</b>	
<b>Drink and refreshments for donors</b>	
<b>Snacks for workers and medical team</b>	

## ACTION ON BLOOD

Typical roles on a drive are:

**To do: Assign people their roles and ensure everyone knows how donors will move through the donation process**

- Drive Manager - This is your role. You will need to ensure that the drive is running smoothly and that there are no bottlenecks. You will provide communication between the different areas and workers, problem solve and arrange for additional supplies should you run out. You should walk around the drive, spending time in each area and checking that everyone is happy. Take time to talk to the donors and the key contact at the host organisation. They will provide important feedback on how the drive is going.
- Welcome - The welcoming team play a crucial role in setting the tone of the whole drive. They need to be cheerful, helpful and friendly. Their role includes welcoming donors as they arrive and recruiting more donors (those that didn't sign up or are just passing through) on the day.
- Donor Support & Hospitality - They should know the process and where donors need to go. Their role includes directing donors through the different stages, supporting donors to complete their questionnaire and providing donors with emotional support. Their role also includes providing donors with refreshments whilst they are in the recovery section. If additional food or entertainment is provided, this team should be in charge of these things.
- Administration - You will need at least 1 person to register donors. This person must be calm under pressure and have good attention to detail. After donors have been registered and given a unique donation number (you can use Tyvex wristbands with sequential numbering or simply write their number on their form), they should be directed to a waiting area to complete their donor questionnaire.
- Medical Team - Your LBS will provide the team to do the health screening and actual blood collection.

Depending on the size of the drive and the needs of the donors, you may wish to enlist volunteers from the donor organisation to assist you with a) Welcome and b) Donor support & Hospitality. You must NOT give the role of Administration or Drive Manager to a volunteer from the host organisation.

Some of the roles can be done by the same person/people if the drive is small. If the drive isn't too large, as Drive Manager you can do the Administration role also.

Everyone should have a name tag with their role clearly visible. You can do this cheaply with sticky name labels.

**To do: Ensure donors have a pleasant donation experience**

The tracking of donors from the start to the end of the process is a crucial factor in ensuring blood safety and good donor care. At every stage of the process, you and your LBS should re-confirm the identity of the donor by asking them an identifying question such as date of birth or full name and address.

Donors should be given the chance to complete their questionnaire in privacy. However, some may require support to understand the questions.

When helping donors with their questionnaires, Donor Support & Hospitality should ensure that no one else can hear their answers. Once completed, donors should take their forms with them to the medical team at the health screening area.

## **ACTION ON BLOOD**

The LBS will take over from there. They will decide who is allowed to donate, who can't because they have been deferred (they can't donate now but may be able to at a later date) and who can't because they have been permanently rejected (they can't donate ever).

Donors who made the big decision to donate but then are not allowed to, often feel very let down and disappointed. You have to treat them with care. Donor Support & Hospitality should encourage them to come into the recovery area and enjoy the refreshments and other benefits prepared for successful donors.

Some donors may need extra support to go through with the donation. Donor Support & Hospitality can offer to stay with them whilst they are donating, hold their hand, help them take pictures with their mobile phone, chat with them etc. They may want a friend to come with them, this is acceptable too. However, try to keep the donation area as calm as possible. It is still a medical space, with real medical procedures taking place.

**To do: Give donors post-donation information and the "I donated" certificate**

After donation, donors need to remain in the recovery section for 15 minutes. This is to ensure there are no adverse effects from the donation and that they drink and have a snack. Once they have spent the required 15 minutes with no issues, the Medical Team can give them the all clear. Each donor should receive the post-donation information and the "I donated" certificate. The donor is then free to go.

## **8. End the drive**

**To do: Clear away neatly and thank your team**

At the end of the drive ensure that you leave the venue in a neat and tidy condition. Not only is this respectful of the host organisation, but it is an important part of the Action on Blood brand as a professional organisation.

The LBS will pack away their medical equipment and take the blood collected with them. They may request photocopies of the completed donor consent forms.

Gather all the workers and volunteers and let them know how successful the drive was - the number of donors that attended, the number of units of blood collected etc. Thank them for their contribution to saving lives.