



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL BLOOD PROGRAMME HONOURS OUTSTANDING DONORS ON WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY

- **1,500 individuals and groups recognised for their support of the National Blood Programme**
- **First “Blood Donor Tree” Project launched in search of largest family of blood donors in Singapore**

Singapore, 12 June 2010 – Blood donors in Singapore celebrated World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) today, and witnessed the presentation of over 1,500 awards to exceptionally committed individuals and corporate/community groups for their support of the National Blood Programme. Held at Clifford Square, the celebrations also included a fun-filled carnival and a special run of the Fullerton Heritage Quest.

Mr Heng Chee How, Minister of State (Prime Minister’s Office), Mr Matthias Yao, Mayor for South East CDC and Ms Indranee Rajah, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, graced the event and presented the awards to the champion donors at three recognition ceremonies.

For the first time, three individuals were conferred the Medals for Life¹; a female was crowned Champion of Champion²; and three females were presented with the Diamond³ awards. Medal of Life recipient, Mr Augustus Chan, who comes from a family of seven brothers all of whom have donated blood, said, *“Knowing that my blood is extending someone’s life and giving hope to his or her family members is rewarding. Being able to donate now is a blessing as I know I am healthy.”*

The event also saw beneficiaries of blood transfusions sharing moving testimonials about their new lease of life and their gratitude for having received blood at their point of need. Recounting his two-year-old son’s battle against aplastic anemia, a rare blood disorder which required blood

¹ Medal for Life – 200 units of blood (male) 150 (female)

² Champion of Champion – 150 units of blood (male) 125 (female)

³ Diamond – 125 units of blood (male) 100 (females)

transfusions and a bone marrow transplant, Mr Kewin Chew said, *“Blood sustained my son’s life so he could undergo life-saving medical procedures. My family and I were deeply touched by the love and generosity of complete strangers. My son is now an active 6-year-old, and through my story, I wish to bring hope to others and encourage more to come forth to give the gift of life.”*

In tandem with the global theme for World Blood Donor Day “New blood for the world”, the Youth Donor Club in Singapore has kick-started the Youth Ambassador Programme, a new initiative to inform and educate secondary school students on the importance of voluntary blood donation. Mr Tee Tua Ba, Chairman of Singapore Red Cross explained, *“Youths made up 36% of the total donor population in 2009. Through this youth-to-youth programme, we hope that more youths will be given the correct information on blood donation and be ready and committed to donate blood when they turn 16.”*

Today, Singapore requires 100,000 units of blood a year due to increasing medical needs. Blood is needed not only to save lives in times of emergencies but to sustain the lives of patients who require regular or immediate blood transfusions. Mr Tee said, *“Since our appointment as the National Blood Donor Recruiter in 2001, we have seen a steady increase in the pool of blood donors, from about 40,000 regular donors to over 60,000 in 2009. We are happy to note that 70% of these are repeat donors who have made blood donation an integral part of their lives.”*

At the event, Minister of State (Prime Minister’s Office), Mr Heng Chee How launched the “Someone in My Family is a Blood Donor” Campaign. Its key activity, the “Blood Donor Tree Project”, encourages individuals to track blood donors in their family and celebrate their familial legacy of saving lives by building an online blood donor tree. The project aims to find the largest family of blood donors in Singapore. Blood donors are encouraged to log on to www.blooddonortree.sg where they can plant their own family tree. The competition will run online till 30th September 2010, and the top three largest donor families will be announced on 30th October 2010 at a grand event to celebrate these inspiring families.

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About the Singapore Red Cross

As the National Blood Donor Recruiter, the Singapore Red Cross is part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which comprises 186 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Movement's work is based on the seven fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

For more information on the National Blood Programme, visit: <http://www.redcross.org.sg/> or <http://donorweb.org/>.

About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is a multidisciplinary agency that applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services, Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. It operates the national blood bank, Bloodbank@HSA, securing the nation's blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit www.hsa.gov.sg/.

About HSA's Blood Services Group

The Blood Services Group (BSG) of HSA, as the national blood service, secures the nation's blood supply by ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply. It operates the Bloodbank@HSA and is responsible for collecting, processing, testing and distributing blood and blood products to all hospitals in Singapore. It also provides specialist transfusion medicine services in immunohaematology and tissue typing and is actively engaged in the cutting edge therapeutic research area of cell processing.

Bloodbank@HSA is located at the HSA Building at 11 Outram Road, Singapore 169078 (directly opposite Outram Park MRT Station). Blood donors are welcome to call the Bloodbank@HSA at 6213 0626.

About World Blood Donor Day

World Blood Donor Day is dedicated to individuals who voluntarily and regularly donate their blood without any reward, except the knowledge that they have helped to save lives and help those in need. It also aims to create wider awareness of the importance of voluntary blood donation and encourage more people to become regular blood donors. The theme for 2010 is *New Blood for the World*, with a worldwide campaign focused on young donors whose belief in the cause will provide the precious blood to save lives. Over 80 million units of blood are donated globally every year. There is a need to reiterate the importance of voluntary blood donation and to encourage more people, especially young people, to make blood donation an integral part of their lives. For more information, visit: <http://wbdd.org/>.