



Singapore Joins 21 Countries/Regions in the International Missing Type Campaign to Raise the Need for More Blood Donors

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) and the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), together with blood services from 21 countries/regions¹, launched the International Missing Type Campaign today. During the week-long campaign, organisations and individuals remove their As, Os and Bs (letters that make up the blood group system) from their websites, social media profiles and branding. The campaign aims to highlight the need for more people to come forward to give blood. Over the last 10 years, while Singapore's blood demand has risen by 45%, the number of blood donors has only grown by 39%. With an ageing population and expanding healthcare facilities, blood usage will continue to increase by 3% to 5% annually to 220,000 units by 2030. The number of blood donors needs to grow in tandem to ensure an adequate blood supply in Singapore.

2 HSA and SRC have been working with partners, including government agencies, hospitals, schools and malls, to kick-start the campaign in Singapore. A total of 33 organisations are involved through posting on online and social media platforms; removing letters from physical signage; running roadshows and blood drives; as well as carrying out student and staff engagement activities. Please refer to **Annex A** for the list of participating organisations.

3 To cite some examples, the Singapore Botanic Gardens has removed the ABO letters on the signage at its Tanglin, Nassim and Bukit Timah entrance gates, while KK Women's and Children's Hospital has hidden from view the letters, "A" and "O" on signage at key locations around the hospital. The Singapore Management University (SMU) is running a digital contest on SMU's corporate website, while Hwa Chong

¹ 21 countries/regions include Singapore. Others are: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, England, Hong Kong, Japan, Lithuania, Nepal, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Republic of Korea, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, USA, Wales.

Institution and Nanyang Girls' High School have planned a series of student-initiated activities during the week to promote the importance of blood donation. The National University Hospital and Tiong Bahru Plaza are also organising roadshows to help raise awareness of the campaign and attract more blood donors. In support of the campaign, Mediacorp newspaper, TODAY, has removed the 'O' from its print masthead. During this week, blood donors are also encouraged to take photo with their ABO-covered names, and share such photos on social media pages.

4 “I am heartened by the strong support we have received from our partners, especially from our healthcare family. In fact, all public hospitals will be taking part in this campaign. Through this campaign, we want to generate more conversations about blood donation, and encourage different communities in Singapore to come together and donate blood as a way of giving back to society. Ensuring sufficient blood supply for our patients cannot be HSA's or SRC's efforts alone; we need everyone in Singapore to rally around this meaningful cause,” says Dr Mimi Choong, Chief Executive Officer of Health Sciences Authority.

5 “This campaign has opened many doors and I hope more people will make regular blood donation a part of their lifestyle. Today, only 1.8% of the residential population donate blood, and these donors carry the burden of the national blood transfusion needs. A sustainable blood supply is the cornerstone of a resilient community, and blood donation should be part of the national psyche. All of us must see blood donation as a lifesaving act and a social responsibility,” says Mr Benjamin William, Secretary General/CEO of Singapore Red Cross.

6 The campaign is taking place from 16 to 21 August 2016. More information could be found on: redcross.sg/missingtype. Individuals and organisations can get involved by:

- Taking a photo of themselves with their ABO-omitted names.
- Posting the photo on their social media pages with **'I've dropped my [As/Bs/Os] to support the #MissingTypeSG campaign. You can do the same too and help spread the word about blood donation: redcross.sg/missingtype. #missingtype'** and encourage their friends or followers to do the same.

7 The public can also find out more about blood donation at the following roadshows or at blood banks at HSA, Dhoby Ghaut, Westgate Tower or Woodlands.

- National University Hospital: 16 – 30 August
- Tiong Bahru Plaza: 16 – 23 August

8 The Missing Type campaign was first mooted and run by the NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) in England and North Wales in June 2015. The idea was based on the insight that people rarely think about their blood type. However, they would start paying attention to it and the importance of blood donation in saving lives if the ABO letters were missing from everyday life. This year, NHSBT has invited blood services from countries/regions, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, USA and Singapore, to participate in this successful campaign.

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About the Health Sciences Authority

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services, and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. A multidisciplinary authority, HSA serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/> or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSASg.

The HSA's Blood Services Group, as the national blood service, secures the nation's blood supply by ensuring a safe and adequate blood supply. It 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 therapy.

About Singapore Red Cross

Singapore Red Cross (SRC) is a homegrown humanitarian organisation, dedicated to relieving human suffering, protecting lives and dignity and responding to emergencies since 1949. We serve the vulnerable through our blood donor recruitment programme, home and day activity centre for the disabled, transport aid, food aid, and community first aid. We build capacity and resilience through our training academy, and volunteer and youth development. Beyond our shores, we mobilise and translate contributions from the donor community to relief and recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, with the aim of helping communities affected by disasters. For more information, please see www.redcross.sg

Appointed the National Blood Donor Recruiter in April 2001, SRC is responsible for three main functions in the National Blood Programme: recruitment, retention and recognition of blood donors; promotion and education to increase public awareness on the importance of blood donation; and organisation of mobile blood donation drives in the community. For more information on blood donation, visit connect.redcross.sg

Annex A

Categories	Organisations
Corporations	Samsung Electronics Singapore
Government Agencies	Civil Service College
	Health Promotion Board
	Ministry of Health
	Public Service Division, Prime Minister's Office
	Singapore Police Force
Healthcare Institutions	Alexandra Health Systems
	Ang Mo Kio – Thye Hua Kwan Hospital
	Changi General Hospital
	Jurong Health Services
	KK Women's and Children's Hospital
	Mount Alvernia Hospital
	National Cancer Centre Singapore
	National Dental Centre Singapore
	National Neuroscience Institute
	National University Health System
	National University Hospital
	Raffles Medical Group
	Singapore General Hospital
	Tan Tock Seng Hospital
	Thomson Medical
Malls	Tiong Bahru Plaza
Media	Mediacorp
Public Spaces	Singapore Botanic Gardens
Schools	Hwa Chong Institution
	Nanyang Girls' High School
	Nanyang Polytechnic
	Nanyang Technological University
	National University of Singapore
	Ngee Ann Polytechnic
	Raffles Institution
	Singapore Institute of Technology
Singapore Management University	