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www.blood.co.uk

Thanks to blood donors for gift of life this Easter

The National Blood Service has issued a huge thank you to blood donors in the North West for helping keep blood stocks healthy over the Easter bank holiday.

Blood supplies typically come under pressure over the long Easter weekend because many regular donors go away on holiday, and blood donation sessions are not held over the extended break. However, this year thanks to an excellent response from donors in the region blood stocks remained at healthy levels.

Rachel Hollingworth, spokesperson for the National Blood Service, said, "We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone across the North West who made time to donate and save lives this Easter. It can't have been easy fitting it in around holidays and plans to see family, so we are really grateful to you for making a special effort to help others."

Nationally blood stocks now stand at around 7 days, the ideal level the National Blood Service aims for. However, donors will still be needed in coming weeks to ensure they remain at reasonable levels, as well as to replace those people who find they cannot donate due to factors including age, travel or ill health.

Just one donation of blood, split into red cells, platelets and plasma can save the lives of up to three patients. Around 4,700 donations are needed every week for patients across the North West.

Anyone aged 17 – 60 weighing over 7st 12lbs (50 kg), in general good health, could potentially start saving lives by becoming a blood donor. For more information on becoming a blood donor including details of your nearest sessions, or to make an appointment, call 0845 7 711 711 or visit www.blood.co.uk

Ends

For further information please contact:

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Notes

- the NBS collects approximately 2.4 million units of blood each year from 1.9 million blood donors
- The NHS needs 8,000 voluntary donations of blood daily
- Only 4% of the eligible population are active blood donors
- a unit of blood is measured as 470mls (or just under a pint)
- Whole blood donors can give every 16 weeks, that's three times per year
- regular blood donors can keep giving up until the age of 70
- There are 4 main blood groups – O, A, B and AB. Group O is the most common and therefore the most in demand. Over 95 per cent of the blood collected is processed into its main components – red cells, platelets and plasma. A regular supply of blood is vital – red cells last only 35 days and platelets only 5 days.