

# Appeal for blood donations during Chinese New Year as blood stocks run Low

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) announced today (January 27) that most BTS donor centres will be open during the Chinese New Year holidays to enable members of the public to donate blood and replenish the blood inventories for patients in need. The increase in demand for blood transfusions since the start of the winter surge has caused blood stocks to run very low at public hospitals. The blood inventories have been depleted to an alarming level and can only be sustained for three or four days. The BTS appeals to the public to come forward to donate blood as soon as possible in order to replenish the blood inventories for patients in need of blood transfusion.

Amid the fifth wave of the epidemic, social activities are reduced while mobile blood donation services for corporations and schools have been cancelled. As a result, blood collection has dropped significantly to 300 to 400 units daily this year, which is not sufficient to meet the daily blood demand from hospitals during the winter surge. Needless to say, blood collection is crucial for the Accident and Emergency Departments, not to mention for emergency operations such as organ transplants as well as for meeting blood demand from thalassaemia and blood cancer patients.

The safety of donors is of paramount importance and the BTS follows stringent measures to safeguard blood safety and prevent any possible infection. All blood collection sites are thoroughly disinfected and donors must wear masks and have their temperature checked and hands sanitised before entering the donation areas. Blood donors are advised to make appointments by calling the BTS Booking Hotline at 2710 1333 (during office hours) or BTS donor centres, booking online on the BTS website or booking via the "HK Blood" mobile app to prevent long waiting times and gathering outside the centres. For details, please visit [www.ha.org.hk/rcbts](http://www.ha.org.hk/rcbts).

Most of the BTS' donor centres will maintain normal services during the Chinese New Year holidays (see Annex 1). As a token of thanks, every blood donor who donates successfully from February 1 to 4 (the first to fourth days of the Chinese New Year) will receive a Chinese New Year goodie bag (see Annex 2), while stocks last.