

# **“Blood Donations” feature launched on social media platform to encourage people to donate blood**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) today (October 8) announced the launch of "Blood Donations", which is a product of collaboration between the BTS and the social media platform Facebook to promote blood donation. The "Blood Donations" feature provides members of the public with the latest information on blood donation activities and donor centres including the locations of donor centres and opening times. It also serves as a platform for blood donation appeals. The BTS aims to raise public awareness of the importance of voluntary blood donation by means of the social media platform to encourage members of the public to save lives by giving blood.

As the only public institution collecting blood and providing blood products to all public and private hospitals in Hong Kong, the BTS strives to maintain a sustainable blood supply. A safe and reliable supply of blood is essential to the city's healthcare system. However, blood collection has dropped since early this year amid the pandemic. The Chief Executive and Medical Director of the BTS, Dr Lee Cheuk-kwong, appealed for blood donation. "With fewer people going out and given the unstable weather lately, the quantity of blood collected from donor centres and mobile blood drives has significantly dropped. The BTS hopes to motivate citizens to give blood by providing Facebook users with information on blood donation services via the new feature. Users will be notified when the city's blood inventories are low and they could take prompt action," Dr Lee said.

In response to the pandemic, a series of precautionary measures have been implemented within the BTS. All donation sites are thoroughly disinfected and donors are required to put on masks, have their temperature checked and sanitise their hands before entering the donation area. Blood donors are strongly advised to make appointments to avoid waiting and to prevent crowds from forming.

Facebook will show the message of "Blood Donations" to local users in their News Feed to encourage participation. Registration only means that users agree to receive notifications from the BTS, and no other additional information is required. Users who are interested in this feature may access [www.facebook.com/donateblood](http://www.facebook.com/donateblood) for registration. Donors can make blood donation appointments directly through the "HK Blood" app ([www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/mobile-app](http://www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/mobile-app)) or via [www.blooddonor.org.hk](http://www.blooddonor.org.hk).