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Crisis Media Release – Low Blood Stocks

Johannesburg, 16 October 2026 – The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is calling on eligible South Africans to donate blood as national blood stocks decline, with blood collections falling behind demand and placing increasing pressure on the blood supply.

SANBS aims to maintain a five-day blood supply to ensure hospitals have access to blood when patients need it. To meet daily demand, SANBS needs to collect 3,500 units of blood. However, collections are currently falling behind demand, placing continued pressure on the national blood supply.

The woman giving birth. The cancer patient. The man undergoing open-heart surgery.

All of these people - and those who love them - rely on one thing: blood donations. Their lives, their futures, are at stake. With blood stocks under pressure, the need for donations is increasingly urgent.

"The current blood supply is under significant pressure, and we urgently need South Africans - active donors, lapsed donors and potential donors - to come forward and help strengthen national blood stocks," says Monique Schreiner, Senior Manager, Donor Relations at SANBS.

"So many people in life-threatening situations require blood. It is what saves that haemorrhaging mother's life, so that she can raise and love the baby she has just brought into the world. It is what saves someone suffering complications during major surgery. It is what helps that cancer patient endure and survive treatment.

"And that's the point: it's not just blood. It's saving people's lives, through a simple, easy donation," says Monique Schreiner.

The SANBS is therefore making an earnest appeal for South Africans to step forward and donate blood today.

The SANBS appeals to South Africans to become regular donors. A commitment to donating blood consistently helps maintain a reliable supply for patients who need it throughout the year.

Furthermore, SANBS is also calling on businesses, organisations and communities to support blood donation efforts by making suitable, publicly accessible venues available for blood drives. Whether by opening your doors to host a blood drive or committing to donating regularly, every act of support helps strengthen the nation's blood supply. Because when patients need blood, every donation matters, and every moment counts.

sanbs.org.za
Toll free 0800 11 9031

Board of Directors: Executives: V Reddy (CEO), T Kgaghe (CFO), U Jentsch (Medical Director) **Non-Executives:** T Mokgatla (Chairperson), F Burn, S Fakie, G Goolab, C Henry, S Kabane, G Leong, L Molefe, P Mthethwa, M Vaitilingum
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Universal Blood Type



Donates to Everyone

Receives from

Be the Lifeline. Donate today.

Stay connected with SANBS on social media:

- X (@theSANBS)
- Facebook (@SANBS)
- Instagram (@thesanbs)
- TikTok (@thesanbs)

END.

ABOUT SANBS

The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is an independent non-profit organisation and a leader in blood transfusion. SANBS operates in eight of South Africa's nine provinces (excluding the Western Cape, which is served by the Western Cape Blood Service) and provides crucial support to countries in the SADC region.

The organisation prides itself on being the lifeblood of South Africa's healthcare system, providing over one million world-class blood products annually. This pedigree comes from world-class testing and collection protocols, ensuring a safe supply for patients. SANBS operates a vast network of donor centres, including more than 60 fixed centres and over 100 mobile collection sites daily.

SANBS aims to collect 3,500 units of blood daily to ensure a safe and sufficient supply for South Africa's healthcare system. Regular donations are critical because a unit of blood lasts only 42 days. We encourage donors to commit to giving blood regularly, ensuring a continuous supply for those in need.

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