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## UPDATE ON THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK AND BLOOD SAFETY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**12 MARCH 2020**

We have noted an influx of visits to our donor centres and several claims on social media about the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) providing testing for the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

We wish to state unequivocally that the SANBS does not conduct testing for Coronavirus at our donor centres.

“Diagnostic tests for COVID-19 are not done on blood, but on throat swabs and sputum samples,” asserted Dr Jackie Thomson, Medical Director of SANBS.

Testing is currently available at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) for free. You can also get tested at Lancet Laboratories and at some National Health Laboratories Services (NHLS).

The SANBS urges donors to take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of their fellow citizens. If you are feeling unwell or exhibiting any clinical symptoms of infection (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat and shortness of breath), you are encouraged to delay donation until you are in good health.

**If you feel you are at risk, have come into contact with someone who has been infected or fear that you may have been infected with COVID-19, speak to your physician for advice. Alternatively, contact the toll-free NICD hotline on 0800 029 999.**

**ENDS**



## About the SANBS

The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is an independent non-profit organization, and one of the leaders in the discipline of blood transfusion. SANBS operates in eight out of nine provinces in South Africa (with the exception of the Western Cape, which is serviced by the Western Province Blood Transfusion Service). It also provides crucial support to countries in the SADC region.

SANBS supplies over one million blood products annually and is rated among the top blood services in the world. This pedigree comes, as a result of world-class testing and collection protocols which ensure that the blood which is transfused is always of top quality.

The blood is processed into its constituent components; red blood cells, plasma and platelets therefore in principle a single blood donation can save a minimum of three lives.

Universal Blood Type:



Donates to .....Everyone

Receives from .....