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FACEBOOK PARTNERS WITH SANBS AND THE WESTERN CAPE BLOOD SERVICE TO HELP INCREASE BLOOD DONATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

18 MAY 2020

Johannesburg, Monday 18 May 2020: Facebook in partnership with the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) and the Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS) announce a new partnership to encourage people to donate blood. Starting today, South Africans who are over 18 years old, will have the option to sign up as blood donors on Facebook, be notified when blood donor centres near them have an urgent need for donations and invite friends to donate.

With South Africa being the first African country that Facebook has launched this feature, this initiative comes at a crucial time as the country starts to see a significant drop in blood donations as a result of people staying home to prevent the spread of COVID-19, despite health institutions like the World Health Organization saying it is still safe to donate blood.

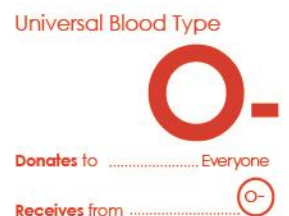
Since its launch in 2017, Facebook has partnered with blood donation centres around the world, with more than 60 million people having signed up to be blood donors on Facebook in the US, Brazil, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Commenting on the partnerships, Nunu Ntshingila, Regional Director, Facebook Africa said: "We continue to remain committed to building safe and supportive communities on Facebook during these difficult times. We want to make it easy to connect people that want to donate with opportunities to give, whilst learning about the blood donation opportunities near them and inspiring action. This is an important partnership with SANBS and the Western Cape Blood Service, and one which we believe will make a positive difference to blood giving here in South Africa".

Silungile Mlambo, Chief Marketing Officer at SANBS, added: "We face a number of challenges with regard to the collection of blood each year. This year, the pandemic brought us a new challenge. We are hopeful that through this tool we will have better reach to all our donors. This will revolutionise the way we connect with our donors, allowing us to work smarter and optimise our resources."

sanbs.org.za
Toll free 0800 11 9031

Board of Directors: Executives: J Louw (CEO), J Thomson (Medical Director), Non Executives: G Simelane (Chairman), F Burn, W Gumede, P Knox, G Leong, V Moodley, P Mthethwa, A Ramalho, R Theunissen, Company Secretary: M Luthuli





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Adding their thoughts, Michelle Vermeulen, the Promotions, Public Relations and Planning Manager at Western Cape Blood Service, adds: "The Western Cape Blood Service is excited to be part of this initiative and look forward to welcoming new donors to their fixed sites situated at N1 City, Blue Route Mall and 9 Long Street, Cape Town".

How It Works

People between the ages of 18–65 in South Africa can sign up to be a blood donor on Facebook by going to Blood Donations in the About section of your profile, or access the link: facebook.com/donateblood. People will be able to see requests and opportunities to donate on Blood Donations on Facebook in their mobile devices to over 80 blood donation sites.

- ENDS -

About the SANBS

The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is an independent non-profit organisation, 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.

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