

19 December 2011

Communications Department
Tel: 01225 82 5849/5799/6230/1299

communication@ruh.nhs.uk
www.ruh.nhs.uk

Media Release

Giving the gift of blood

The Royal United Hospital is appealing to the public to make someone very happy this Christmas with the gift of blood. Although it's a very busy time of year, sparing an hour to donate blood before the holidays could help save a life.

Winter is a busy time for the NHS and although the RUH is well prepared for an increase in the demand for services, there are factors that can make it difficult for people to make their regular blood donations at this time of year.

Transfusion specialist at the RUH, Helen Maria, says: "The Transfusion Team at the RUH keeps a very close eye on our stocks of donor blood, but due to factors beyond our control, stocks can become quite low over the Christmas period. Donor blood stocks often fall over the winter due to bad weather or illness and public holidays can also reduce the number of donor sessions available. It is vitally important that regular blood donors find time to donate over the holidays. It would also be an excellent opportunity to donate for the first time – a wonderful gift for someone who desperately needs a blood transfusion.

"The NHS Blood & Transplant service updates us regularly on the national blood supply, so we are able to respond very quickly to any alert about reduced blood stocks using our blood shortage contingency plan.

"We hope the public will add one more thing to their 'to do' lists - to make a blood donation before the holidays. This will ensure that someone somewhere will be able to enjoy Christmas this year and for many years to come."

Ends