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Cllr Steven Thomas
Member's Support
Council House
Earl Street
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11 September 2013

Dear Cllr Thomas,

Thank you for contacting NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) to request further information on our review of the workplace bloodmobile sessions in the West Midlands.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) operate a very active blood collection programme in the West Midlands. We currently collect blood from three types of sessions, fixed site collection centres in Birmingham and Stoke, public sessions in town halls, community centres and other venues, and workplace sessions during which we collect blood from donors on vehicles known as bloodmobiles.

NHSBT is a publicly funded organisation, therefore we have a responsibility to deliver our services as efficiently and as effectively as possible. We must make best use of our donors' gift and our own resources. Therefore, we regularly review when and where we collect blood to make sure we are collecting blood at the right time in the right quantities to meet patients' needs.

As a result of our current review, we are considering taking the difficult decision to discontinue our workplace bloodmobile programme in the West Midlands. If we take this decision, it will mean that the workplace bloodmobile sessions currently operating will no longer take place from spring 2014. Our public sessions, such as Central Hall in Coventry and others held in town halls, community centres and other venues are not affected by this review.

We appreciate a blood donation session at work is a very convenient way for donors to give blood. However a bloodmobile session requires 3 donor carers and a registered nurse to collect 35 units of blood during a 5 hour session; while a session with 9 beds (in a venue such as a church hall or community centre) requires 1 nurse and 11 staff to collect 135 units in 5 hours. This means a team collecting blood from a community based session can collect nearly four times more blood in one day and collect more units of blood per member of staff at the session, without the high transport costs of running a bloodmobile.

At the end of August, we started contacting affected donors to tell them about our review. We will contact them again, once the review is complete, to confirm what changes will go ahead. If their session is discontinued, we will offer them support in finding alternative sessions so that they can continue donating in the area. Then, when it is time for them to donate again, they will be invited to the blood session nearest to where they live or nearest their workplace

if they prefer. In the meantime, existing, planned sessions at workplaces will take place as usual.

It is important to stress that there will still be blood donation sessions in Coventry and surrounding areas going forward, so every donor that wants to give blood will still be able to do so. We very much hope most people will; we appreciate that each and every one of them saves and improves lives every time they come to donate

NHSBT is carefully considering this review in order to continue our work in ensuring that the blood supply chain is being managed as efficiently and effectively as possible. There has not been a shortage of blood in this country for many years due to this unwavering commitment. NHSBT works hard to meet all hospital and patient demand. I wish to assure you that we are taking a cautious approach with this review to ensure that if we do decide to withdraw from using the bloodmobiles, we retain the flexibility to increase blood collections in the future should demand rise.

I hope that the information provided here has been helpful in addressing the concerns raised. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Beggs', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ian Beggs
Assistant Director External Affairs