



Press Release

17 July 2020

NCS and the NHS team up to encourage teens to donate their 'first pint'

- **NCS partners with the NHS to ask teens to register to donate a pint of blood at a local donation session, as adults fill pubs for their first pint after lockdown**
- **The NHS relies on 135,000 new donors a year and needs more young people to ensure the right mix of blood groups**
- **'My First Pint' is part of the 'One Million Hours of Doing Good' initiative launched by NCS in June**

As thousands of people head to pubs this month as they reopen, NCS (National Citizen Service) is encouraging teens aged 16 or over to register to donate their 'first pint' - a pint of blood once they turn 17.

Launched in partnership with NHS Blood and Transplant, 'My First Pint' is part of the NCS 'One Million Hours of Doing Good' initiative aiming to boost blood donations from young people across the country to help get the right mix of people giving blood. Teenagers will be encouraged to make a donation, safe in the knowledge that their contribution will make a real impact to ensure the long-term supply of blood. With young people currently making up the highest proportion of blood donors, NHS Blood and Transplant wants them to continue leading the way and keep saving lives to help ensure donors for the future.

With the NHS relying on around 135,000¹ new donors a year, the initiative highlights the need for new donors to come forward to match patient needs in the future.

More black donors are also urgently needed because they are more likely to have the blood types needed by black patients in need. While a new generation of young black Britons are regularly donating, more black blood donors are still needed. An additional 40,000² black donors are needed over the next three years³. Black people are ten times more likely than white people to have the vitally important Ro blood subtype, which is vital for treating sickle cell disease, yet only

¹ [Why give blood](#) (Give blood)

² [Why give blood](#) (Give blood)

³ [Giving blood](#) - Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (Give blood)

around 1.5% of current blood donors are black. 'My First Pint' aims to show teens aged 16 or over how they can become part of the solution.

Mark Gifford, NCS Chief Executive, says: *"During lockdown, we've seen the nation really come together and collectively show their support for the NHS. We want to maintain this momentum and ask less vulnerable teenagers across the country to keep doing good by donating their first pint of blood while potentially saving a life in the process. Teenagers are ready to play a part in rebuilding their local communities and want to help reshape the future post-COVID – this is just one of the many ways they can show their commitment to our 'One Million Hours of Doing Good' initiative and demonstrate a 'No We Can' attitude."*

Mike Stredder, Director of Blood Donation at NHS Blood and Transplant says: *"We need 400 people to register as new donors every day to maintain the blood supply, for the best chance of keeping hearts pumping. For many reasons it's vital that young people continue to register and donate – particularly young men and black people – not least because older people become less likely to be able to donate blood."*

Please do something amazing and register to give blood now to start saving lives, especially if you live or work near to one of our donor centres."

As part of the NCS 'My First Pint' initiative teens can register on the [NHS 'Give Blood' website](#) where they can make an appointment to donate. Registration is open to teens as soon as they turn 16, with the opportunity to donate from their 17th birthday. Donation slots are available five months following registration, and there is [advice](#) on how to give blood during Covid-19. Extra safety measures are in place on session to keep donors and staff safe at this time.

'My First Pint' is part of NCS's 'One Million Hours of Doing Good,' a wider pledge to enable up to one million hours for teens to take an active role in helping the country recover post Covid-19.

For more information on how to get involved visit www.wearencs.com or follow @ncs. To register for a blood donation appointment visit the NHS Give blood website www.blood.co.uk

ENDS

For more information contact: ncs@karmarama.com

About National Citizen Service [NCS]

NCS is an experience like no other. Designed for 16-17 year olds across England and Northern Ireland, NCS is a youth programme that runs every summer and autumn, during school holidays. Teens get the opportunity to mix with a new crowd, live away from home for a while, take on new challenges and in the process build lifelong friendships.

The programme is all about emboldening young people – by giving them a taste of independence and equipping them with essential skills for life. NCSers then get a chance to take these new-found skills for a test-run in their local community.

NCS is dedicated to providing a platform to make sure young people are heard and can engage with their community by completing passion projects, raising awareness and providing solutions to the issues they care about.

The experience might last just a few weeks, but the impact? That lasts a lot longer. Since 2009 nearly 600,000 young people have taken part in NCS, completing over 14.5 million hours of community action, and gaining priceless life experiences.

NCS costs no more than £50 - with bursaries and support for those with special educational needs or disabilities also available. NCS's mission is to give every young person the life-changing experience.

To find out more visit wearencs.com

Visit NCS social media platforms on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

About NCS Trust

National Citizen Service Trust is an Arm's Length Body of DCMS incorporated by Royal Charter and established to shape, support, champion and lead a thriving National Citizen Service.

National Citizen Service Trust is registered in England and Wales with Royal Charter Body number RC000894. Our registered office is at The Pembroke Building, Kensington Village, Avonmore Road, London, W14 8DG.

To learn more about NCS Trust visit [LinkedIn](#)

To find out more, visit the [website](#), or follow NCS on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

About NHS Blood and Transplant:

- NHS Blood and Transplant is a joint England and Wales Special Health Authority. We provide the blood donation service for England and the organ donation service for the UK. We also provide donated tissues, stem cells and cord blood. We are an essential part of the NHS, saving and improving lives through public donation.
- It is quick and easy to book an appointment to give blood. Call 0300 123 23 23 or visit www.blood.co.uk
- NHSBT has 23 permanent donor centres in London (Tooting, Edgware, West End) Manchester (Plymouth Grove and Norfolk House), Cambridge, Luton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Leicester, Bradford, Leeds, Newcastle, Lancaster, Liverpool, Stoke, Birmingham, Bristol, Gloucester, Oxford, Southampton, Poole and Plymouth. Our mobile teams also collect blood at community venues such as church halls around the country.
- NHS Blood and Transplant needs to collect 1.4 million units of blood each year to meet the needs of patients across England.
- There are four main blood groups – O, A, B and AB. O negative (the universal blood group) and B negative are particularly vulnerable to shortfalls. So, we want people with those blood groups to donate as regularly as they can.
- The overall demand for blood is falling by 3-4% per year due to improvements in clinical practice and our work with hospitals to ensure blood is used appropriately for patients.

- We need 135,000 new blood donors each year to replace those who stop donating and to ensure we have the right mix of blood groups to match patient needs in the future
- We urgently need more black donors as they are more likely to have the blood type needed to treat the increasing number of patients suffering from sickle cell disease.
- There is an urgent need for donors with Ro blood. Only 2% of our donors have Ro type blood. Collecting enough is a constant challenge. Ro is often used to save people with the rare blood disorder, sickle cell disease. Ro blood is ten times more common in black people than in white people.