Your Guide to Organizing a Successful Blood Drive

Located at Altru Hospital
1200 South Columbia Road
Grand Forks, ND 58201
Introduction

On behalf of the patients who will benefit from your efforts, the Dak Minn Blood Bank staff thanks you for your commitment to organize your blood drive and/or act as your organizations chairperson for the Blood Donor Program. Blood is a vital resource, which cannot be manufactured. Only people can supply blood, so patients depend on the success of your efforts.

Your blood drive plays a very important role by helping our community maintain a safe and adequate blood supply. Our community depends on the generosity of its healthy residents who voluntarily donate blood at area blood drives and in our donor center.

Sponsoring a blood drive requires teamwork and organization. It also produces a meaningful community service activity in which you play a leading role. Dak-Minn Blood Bank and Altru Health System thank you for seeking to find a way to serve your community and save lives.
Sponsoring an In-House Blood Drive

An In-House Blood Drive is ideal for businesses:

Who do not have a large room to accommodate a mobile blood drive.
Who are unable to guarantee a minimum of 45 donors.
Who have rotating shifts, making it difficult for all employees to participate.

When you sponsor an In-House blood drive:

- Donations are given at the Dak-Minn Blood Bank, Located at Altru Hospital.
- Blood Drives can be scheduled **any time** during our regular operating hours of Mon.-Thurs. 9:30am - 6:00pm and Fri. 9 am – 2 p.m.
- Your blood drive can go for as many days or weeks as you wish.
- You do not need to guarantee a minimum number of donors.
- You are not responsible for providing any equipment.
- Blood drives can be booked as little as 1 week in advance.

How will your business or organization keep track of who has donated?

Individuals that try to donate blood will receive a card from the blood bank verifying the donor’s name, date and time they came to donate.

What you need to do to get started.

- Talk to the people involved in your business or organization. Decide upon a date for the blood drive and how many days you would like your blood drive to last. Consult the blood drive coordinator at the blood bank before picking a date. Many times, there are promotions being held at the blood bank. By scheduling your blood drive during these times, it gives the donors an added incentive to come and donate.
- Choose a contact person that will work with the blood drive coordinator.
- Decide who will collect the verification cards from those persons who have come to donate. These cards will be the only way for you to keep track of those individuals who gave blood. As volunteer blood donations are anonymous and confidential, the blood bank can not give you a list of names of people who have donated. This information must come from the donors themselves. The verification cards are a way to verify that the donor actually went to the blood bank and tried to give blood.
- Pick up posters and other recruitment items from the Dak-Minn Blood Bank. All posters and flyers are provided at no cost to your business or organization. If you would like personalized flyers made, allow 2-3 weeks for printing.
Sponsoring a Mobile Blood Drive

A **Mobile Blood Drive** is ideal for businesses:

Who have a large room to accommodate a mobile blood drive.
Who are able to guarantee a minimum of 45 donors.

**When you sponsor a Mobile Blood Drive:**

- The blood back comes to you.
- Blood Drives can be scheduled Mon.- Thurs. 9 am - 3pm or 10 am-4 p.m.
- Builds cooperative spirit among donors that can be carried to other projects.
- Boosts morale as donors feel goodwill and accomplishment.

**What you need to do to get started:**

- Contact the Dak-Minn blood bank for a blood drive date and time. Dates fill up quickly during the spring and fall so book your date at least 8-12 weeks ahead of time.
- For mobile drives pick a convenient location for your blood drive. The room you choose should be **L A R G E**, well ventilated with multiple plug-ins and good lighting.
- Plan all promotional ideas and advertisement at this time. The blood bank has pre-printed posters available to you at no charge.
- Make a list of previous and potential donors. Include phone number and address if available.
- Hang posters and general information sheets in visible, high traffic areas. Include the blood drive date, times, location (including a room number, if needed). Include a contact person’s name and phone number where interested donors can call to schedule appointment times. In-house blood drive participants call 780-LIFE (5433) to schedule an appointment.
- Begin your recruitment. There are a variety of ways you can recruit donors. Your planning committee should decide which way is best for you. (See page 9 for ideas.)
- Set up the room for the blood drive. Please have all tables, chairs and wastebaskets set up and ready to go one hour before the blood drive begins.
- Have those volunteers helping with set-up meet at the blood drive location 1 hour before the start time to help unload equipment.
- Have those persons working the reception desk arrive 1/2 hour before the blood drive begins for instructions.
- Have the crew volunteering for clean-up come to the blood drive location at the end of the blood drive.
Mobile Blood Drive Room Requirements

- LARGE ROOM (minimum of 25’ x 60’) It is important that we have enough room for all the equipment and to allow privacy during donor screening. Confidentiality is essential. If the room is too small, people can over hear the donors’ answers to the medical history questions. This may cause a donor to answer the questions untruthfully and jeopardize the safety of the blood. The larger the room the better.
- Good lighting
- Well ventilated
- Multiple electrical outlets
- Ground floor or access to an elevator. Avoid stairs if at all possible. Blood drive equipment must be moved by hand and is extremely heavy!
- Bathrooms should be close by and on the same floor as the blood drive.
- Water source close by. Water is needed for donor reactions and clean-up.
- A nearby phone for emergencies.

Supplies sponsors provide

- 12 six foot tables or 6 six foot tables and 6 smaller ones.
- 20-30 chairs
- 5 wastebaskets

Sample Room Arrangement
### Volunteer Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th># of people</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning committee</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Organize blood drive date, location, advertisement, promotional materials and public service announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Compile recruitment calling lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>See Page 9 for ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood drive set-up</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Set up the room before blood drive staff arrives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Remove unnecessary equipment, set up table and chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meet our blood drive staff at the entrance designated for unloading 1 hour before the drive is scheduled to start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception/registration</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Provide donors with reading and registration materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive at blood drive location at least ½ hour before the start of the drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporter</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Someone is needed to run blood to the blood bank at least once during the blood drive. Only needed for blood drive being held in Grand Forks and surrounding area (Thompson, GFAFB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tear-down/clean-up</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Help take down equipment and straighten the room. Meet the blood bank staff in the room at the time the drive is scheduled to end</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blood Drive Promotion

Although Dak-Minn Blood Bank can provide you with an assortment of publicity materials, the best publicity involves people. Here’s a brief listing of ideas to help you get started on your campaign:

Ideas, Ideas, Ideas

♦ Insert an article into your organization’s newsletter with details of the upcoming blood drive. Use personal stories. Find someone who received blood (Over 70% of us do in our lifetime) and ask if they would share their story.
♦ Take Polaroid photos of donors giving blood. Then post them in high traffic areas to encourage others to donate.
♦ Use a “Bring Buddy” theme for a first-time donor campaign where regular donors bring potential first-time donors.
♦ Have a sign-up table outside your cafeteria a few days before the blood drive. This will draw attention to the blood donor program and also provide you with the opportunity to answer questions and promote person-to-person recruitment.
♦ Hand out candy at sign-up tables before the blood drive, along with little notes: “Roll Up Your Sleeve” (Tootsie Rolls), “Let’s Pull Together” (Taffy), “We’re Sweet on Blood Donors” (Chocolate Kisses), or “Save a Life-Donate Blood” (LifeSavers). Food really seems to grab people’s attention.
♦ Use themes! Holiday, seasonal or otherwise! They can be carried through on fliers, posters, decorations and food.
♦ Draw a “blood barometer” to indicate number of donors signed-up. Or have a “tree of life” with donors names tied on.
♦ Announce the blood drive at all supervisor/management meetings.
♦ Gain support from individuals who are not medically able to donate. Ask them to bake desserts for refreshment area, put up posters, or help with recruiting donors.
♦ Write a thank you article for your organization’s newsletter and include names/pictures of donors and volunteers.
♦ Place posters in high visibility areas.
♦ Notify local radio/TV stations and newspapers informing them of the blood drive and invite them to cover the event.
♦ Develop paycheck stuffers to promote your blood drive.
Recruiting the First-Time Donor

To meet the increasing need for blood and blood products, we must continually recruit thousands of first time donors every year. Here are a few tips that might help you:

1. **People do not know what to expect when they initially give blood.**
   Communicate the steps in the donation process: interview, donation and refreshments. Let them know that donating blood is quick, safe and simple.

2. **People are afraid of pain.**
   Communicate that most donors feel no discomfort at all. The needle prick they will feel is like a pinch and lasts only a few seconds. Most donors leave with a good feeling inside.

3. **People are fearful that donating or the sight of blood will make them dizzy.**
   Avoid communicating these types of negative reactions. Focus on the good feelings, and positive outcome of donating. Emphasize that giving blood has no ill effects on the donor’s health.

Research shows that the major reasons people give blood are:

1. Awareness-Community Need
2. Convenient opportunity
3. Response to a blood supply emergency
4. Replacement for a friend or relative
5. Donor Benefits
6. Encouragement from someone they know.

4. **Stress the continuous need for blood donors.**
   Blood must be available every day for patients who need it. Blood is perishable and must be used within 42 days. Other blood products must be used within 5 days. Emphasize the vital need for people to donate on a regular basis in order to maintain an adequate blood supply in our community.

5. **Some people think giving blood is inconvenient and time consuming.**
   Emphasize that advance appointments allow donating blood to be convenient, and that the entire donation process takes less than an hour.

Major reasons people do not give blood are:

1. No one ever asked
2. No convenient opportunity
3. Concerned with discomfort
4. Fear of needles
5. Unaware there is a need
Recruitment Techniques

As stated before, **one-to-one contact between recruiter and prospective donor is the key to success.** Think about it this way. Asking someone to give blood means asking that person to take an hour of their time to donate a pint of blood to patients in need. A poster can’t convince someone that their donation is important—only another person can do that. Remember: blood donation is a very personal commitment.

The following four-step technique has proven to be very successful. Some individuals may be easier to recruit than others may, so it may not be necessary to follow each step with every potential donor.

**Inform**

1. Inform the donor of the daily need for blood in our community.
2. Utilize brochures and other printed materials to assure the individual the donation experience is safe and virtually painless. Help the person realize why any apprehensions are unfounded.
3. Base your conversation on the fact that the blood donor center does not need blood.... patients do.

**Invite**

1. After potential donors are informed, invite them to give blood.
2. Consider the individual’s emotions and attitudes. If you notice any hesitation, ask if he or she has a question or is uncomfortable about the thought of donating blood.
3. Deal with fear. Non-donors are often afraid the procedure will hurt. Of course these fears are unfounded but they are very real to the first-time donor.
4. Be enthusiastic! A prospective donor’s enthusiasm is directly related to your own enthusiasm.
5. Be prepared to answer the more common questions on medical requirements, and refer more complicated questions to the Dak-Minn Blood Bank staff. Leave printed information with those people who are not yet ready to sign up.

**Commit**

1. Ask the prospective donor to make a donation appointment.
2. Ask for time preference and confirm the appointment.

**Remind**

1. People are more likely to honor their commitment if they are reminded shortly before the blood drive. Distribute appointment reminder cards and follow up on the prospects that required time to decide.
2. Remind donors to eat a good meal within four hours of their scheduled donation time. Encourage them to drink extra non-alcoholic fluids as well.
Scheduling Donors

Much of your blood drive’s success will depend on the timetable you establish for the drive itself and the individual donors. These guidelines should help:

The benefits of scheduling donors:

• Saves donors time away from work/school
• Allows the blood center to plan for adequate mobile staffing and supplies
• Permits optimum follow-up care of donors
• Reduces the number of “no-shows”
• Gives you the opportunity to increase donor turn-out
• Increases the overall efficiency of the blood drive

Helpful hints for scheduling donors:

♦ Make sure each donor is aware that it takes approximately 45 minutes from registration to the end of the donation process.
♦ Sign up all donors on the scheduling sheet that the Donor Center representative gives you. This schedule must be sent to the Donor Center the day prior to your drive. This will enable us to insure sufficient supplies.
♦ Emphasize the importance of every donor being on time. This will alleviate the frustration of backlogs.
♦ If possible, plan to stop by the drive periodically throughout the day to assure that everything is running smoothly.
♦ Your Donor Center representative may ask that you schedule a lunch break for the blood drive staff. This lunch break should be reflected on the donor schedule when it is provided to you.
♦ Please complete the sign up sheet by filling up one time slot before moving to the next. This will assure a constant flow of donors.
Recognition

Thanking your donors for taking the time to give blood is crucial for the success of your blood drives. Below are some ideas and suggestions on how to do just that. Some of these creative ideas came from chairpersons that continue to sponsor very successful blood drives.

“The Blood you gave away will wipe a tear away.” Printed on a box of tissues.

“You’ve given JOY “ printed on a bottle of Joy Dishwashing Detergent.

“Thank you for putting the zip back in someone’s life” printed on a box of Zip Lock Bags.

“Thank you for lighting up someone’s life” printed on a card attached to a candle

“You’re a life-saver” Printed on a card attached to a pack of lifesavers

Judene Miller and Vickie Bair of the Pfaltzgraff Co shared these ideas. Thank you for sharing your great ideas!

Other Ideas to thank your donors:
- Personal Thank you from chairperson
- Personalized thank you cards
- Coupon for free ice cream cone, soda or salad etc. in your cafeteria
- Someone from administration personally thanking some of the donors as they give
- Have members of your organization make homemade goodies for the donors

Most of all HAVE FUN! If the donors enjoy themselves and feel appreciated, they'll come back!

A rule of thumb to follow: if the item has a retail value of less than $10, is offered to all donors that present to give blood and there is no resale market for the item, it is most likely an acceptable token of thanks. Please call Dak-Minn Blood Bank with any questions that you may have about any gift you would like to give away!

Ideas, Ideas, Ideas
- Publish an Honor Roll after the blood drive listing the names of all those who participated in the drive. (Donors, deferrals and volunteers) Display the list in a highly visible area.
- Issue a release with the names of first time donors, gallon donors, and multi-gallon donors in your company newsletter.
- Give special awards to those departments that have the highest percentage of its members donating.
- Pass a trophy to the department with the greatest participation and let them keep it until the next drive when another department might take the lead. This makes it fun and may spark a competitive urge to participate.
- A prize drawing among your donors for a special gift. (Donors and deferred donors must both be included in prize drawing.)
- Be Creative. Make your donors feel appreciated. It doesn’t have to be costly, just sincere.
Task Checklist

Prior To Blood Drive

Is your room LARGE, well ventilated, WELL LIT and does it have multiple electrical outlets? Is an elevator or ramp available? Are the bathrooms on the same floor as the blood drive? Is there a close source of water?

Did you make a list of possible people to call, including previous donors, members or employees that may be interested?

Did you hang posters in high traffic, visible areas 2 weeks before the blood drive? Did you include the name of a contact person and a phone number where interested donors can call to make appointments?

Have you organized your team of people to help recruit donors and sign donors for appointment times?

Have you contacted your blood bank representative to update them as to your progress and to get appointment and blood drive reminder cards if needed?

Have you arranged for tables, chairs and wastebaskets to be available the day of the blood drive?

Have you organized your team of people to work the day of the blood drive

- 3-4 people 1 hour before blood drive for set.
- 2 people available throughout the blood drive for registration and canteen. This can be broken into different shifts. It does not need to be the same 2 people all day.
- 3-4 people after the blood drive to help tear down.

Day Of Blood Drive

Are the tables, chairs and wastebaskets set up?

Are bathrooms unlocked?

Is a phone available for emergencies?

Are volunteer workers assembled and ready to go?

Have signs been hung showing where to give blood?