



13 June 2019 – On the occasion of World Blood Donor Day 2019, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari emphasized that everyone in the world had the right to access safe blood transfusion, when and where it was needed. Access to safe blood and blood products is essential for universal health coverage (UHC) and a key component of effective health systems.

Blood transfusion saves millions of lives every year. It can help in the proper management of women experiencing bleeding associated with pregnancy and childbirth, children with severe anaemia, patients with inherited disorders such as thalassemia, and victims of trauma, emergencies, disasters and accidents.

This year's campaign focuses on blood donation and universal access to blood and blood products under the slogan 'Safe blood for all'. "Our aim is to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure that all individuals and communities have access to affordable and timely supplies of safe and quality-assured blood and blood products. This is an integral part of countries' progress towards UHC and to enhance health systems. Both go in line with our regional vision 2023," Dr Al-Mandhari said.

Although the need for blood is universal, many countries in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region face the challenge of making sufficient blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety, especially in humanitarian emergencies. "An adequate and safe blood supply that meets the needs of patients at all times can only be ensured through regular donations by voluntary, unpaid blood donors," Dr Al-Mandhari stated in his message on World Blood Donor Day 2019.

World Blood Donor Day serves to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gift

of blood and to raise awareness of the universal need for safe blood in the delivery of health care and the crucial roles that regular, voluntary donations play in achieving the goal of UHC.

On this occasion, WHO is also calling on all countries to celebrate and thank individuals who donate blood and to encourage those who have not previously donated blood to start donating.

“Everyone who can donate blood should consider making regular donations, so that all countries have adequate blood supplies to help those in need,” the Regional Director added.

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