

# NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICE, GHANA

Our Ref: NBSG/HQ/GCS-0001.....

Your Ref:.....



Post Office Box KB 78  
Korle-Bu, Accra

10<sup>th</sup> July, 2018  
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**TO ALL MEDIA HOUSES**

**PRESS STATEMENT BY NATIONAL BLOOD SERVICE ON VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDINGS CIRCULATING ON SOCIAL MEDIA ALLEGING USE OF DONATED BLOOD FOR RITUALS BY DR OSEI KWAME DESPITE**

The National Blood Service (NBS) has noted with deep shock and utter disappointment video and audio recordings by one Evangelist Emmanuel Addai making rounds in certain social media circles alleging that blood donated by voluntary blood donors during community blood donation drives organised by the Despite Group of Companies are used for rituals by Dr. (h.c.) Osei Kwame Despite.

The assertions by the said Evangelist that the blood collected from voluntary blood donors who patronise such blood donation drives do not get to hospitals are un-informed and portrays a lack of understanding of blood donation process.

The NBS wishes to state emphatically that these assertions by the said Evangelist Addai on the recordings are palpably false, baseless and most regrettable.

We wish to state without equivocation that NO STAFF OF DESPITE GROUP OF COMPANIES was involved in the technical processes of the blood donation exercise (that is, registration; screening; blood collection; storage; and transportation of the donated blood) during the recent community blood drive at the El-Wak Sports Stadium on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The entire blood donation exercise was successfully managed by a joint team of dedicated health professionals drawn from the Southern Zonal Blood Centre, 37 Military Hospital, Police Hospital, and Cape Coast Teaching Hospital

The donated blood collected, as usual, were properly documented and uniquely identified with barcode numbers in line with the mandatory requirement for documenting and tracing blood which is aimed at improving blood safety.

We further wish to state that it is our policy and practice to supply blood and blood components ONLY TO REGISTERED HEALTH FACILITIES AND NOT INDIVIDUALS. We only honour requests for blood and blood components from registered health facilities who present Blood Transfusion Request Forms duly endorsed by qualified health professionals. Relevant details of all donated blood collected and issued to health facilities are captured in our Blood Safety Information System (BSIS).

The NBS completely dissociates itself from the unguarded comments by the said Evangelist and calls on all well-meaning Ghanaians and our cherished blood donors to disregard the contents of these unfortunate recordings. It is our firm believe that these



recordings are only meant to tarnish the hard won reputation of Dr (h.c.) Osei Kwame Despote and also to create public disaffection for such community blood drives which are organised by the NBS in collaboration with corporate organisations, religious bodies and educational institutions.

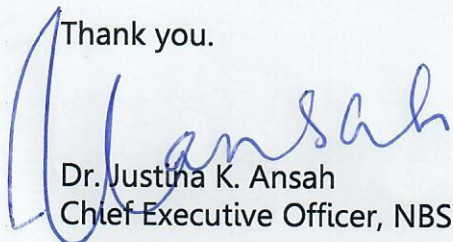
Regular voluntary unpaid blood donors are recognised globally as the safest source of blood for transfusion and the surest way to provide and sustain adequate blood supply. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that regular blood donation by 1% of the population is required to meet the minimum national blood requirement. However, Ghana's blood supply currently relies heavily on replacement donations by family and friends of patients who require blood transfusion therapy. For instance, in 2017, only 36% of total blood donations were collected from voluntary unpaid blood donors.

Moreover, whole blood and blood components have limited shelf lives (35 days for red cells and 5 days for platelets). The various types of blood supplies must therefore be constantly replenished through blood donations to avoid stock outs. It must be emphasised that in emergency cases blood must be readily available for transfusion to avert untimely deaths. The NBS therefore relies on the generosity of our collaborators, sponsors and blood donors to stock the various hospital blood banks regularly.

Over the past few years, the Despote Group of Companies has consistently supported the NBS in its efforts to meet the national blood requirements. The NBS appreciates the enormous contributions of the Despote Group of Companies and other corporate organisations, religious bodies, educational institutions, and organised community groups towards the steady growth of voluntary blood donation in Ghana. We urge our partners to remain committed to the noble objective of saving lives through blood donation.

Finally, we wish to assure the general public of our commitment to blood safety, adequacy and ethical conduct at all times. It is our hope and believe that with the support of our social partners, stakeholders and voluntary donors we will achieve a safe national blood supply system that relies on 100% voluntary blood donation.

Thank you.



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