

Nurturing Volunteerism Spirit among Students by Blood Donation Programme  
(Memupuk Semangat Sukarelawan dikalangan Pelajar melalui Program Derma Darah)

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ABSTRACT

Health-related technologies are rapidly evolving, with significant contributions from government and industry stakeholders. Healthcare technology is defined as any technology, including medical devices, IT systems, algorithms, artificial intelligence (AI), cloud and blockchain, designed to support healthcare organisations. Despite these advancements, one critical element the human blood cannot be artificially created in laboratories. Blood is vital for life and is required for transfusions to support accident victims, surgical and cancer patients, women with complications during pregnancy and childbirth, children with severe anaemia, malaria patients, and malnourished individuals. In Malaysia, the healthcare sector needs approximately 15,000 to 17,000 bags of blood per month, underscoring the importance of maintaining adequate blood reserves. This article aims to share some initiatives and significant actions that have been taken by the Student Leadership Council (SLC-KKKP) to conduct regular blood donation campaigns and programmes. This programme is conducted monthly; at least 50 bags are collected each time. The success of these initiatives relies heavily on the spirit of student volunteerism. Awareness and supportive campaigns are actively being done to promote the importance of this programme. After two years of continuous and never-ending commitment, the student residential college (Kolej Kediaman Kampus Pagoh – KKKP) has been recognised and awarded as The Most Committed Organisation for Blood Donation Programme by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) for two consecutive years, and The Highest Collected Blood Organisation for the year of 2022.

Keywords - Volunteerism, Blood Donation, Healthcare Organisation, Student Volunteer

ABSTRAK

*Teknologi berkaitan kesihatan berkembang pesat, dengan sumbangan besar daripada pihak berkepentingan kerajaan dan industri. Teknologi penjagaan kesihatan ditakrifkan sebagai sebarang teknologi, termasuk peranti perubatan, sistem IT, algoritma, kecerdasan buatan (AI), awan dan rantaian blok, yang direka untuk menyokong organisasi penjagaan kesihatan. Di sebalik kemajuan ini, satu unsur kritikalvdarah manusia tidak boleh dicipta secara buatan dalam makmal. Darah adalah penting untuk kehidupan dan diperluka untuk pemindahan darah untuk menyokong mangsa kemalangan, pesakit pembedahan dan kanser; wanita yang mengalami komplikasi semasa mengandung dan bersalin, kanak-kanak yang mengalami anemia teruk, pesakit malaria, dan individu yang kekurangan zat makanan. Di Malaysia, sektor penjagaan kesihatan memerlukan kira-kira 15,000 hingga 17,000 beg darah sebulan, menekankan kepentingan mengekalkan rizab darah yang mencukupi. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk berkongsi beberapa inisiatif dan tindakan penting yang telah diambil oleh Majlis Pimpinan Pelajar (SLC-KKKP) untuk mengadakan kempen dan program derma darah secara berkala. Program ini dijalankan setiap bulan; sekurang-kurangnya 50 beg dikumpulkan setiap kali. Kejayaan inisiatif ini amat bergantung kepada semangat kesukarelawan pelajar. Kempen kesedaran dan sokongan sedang giat dilakukan untuk mempromosikan kepentingan program ini. Selepas dua tahun komitmen berterusan dan tidak berkesudahan, kolej kediaman pelajar (Kolej Kediaman Kampus Pagoh – KKKP) telah diiktiraf dan dianugerahkan sebagai The Most Committed Organization for Blood Donation Programme oleh Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) selama dua tahun berturut-turut. , dan Pertubuhan Darah Kutipan Tertinggi untuk tahun 2022.*

*Kata kunci - Kesukarelawanan, Derma Darah, Organisasi Penjagaan Kesihatan, Sukarelawan Pelajar*

## BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAMME

Health-related technologies are rapidly evolving, with significant contributions from government and industry stakeholders. Healthcare technology is defined as any technology, including medical devices, IT systems, algorithms, artificial intelligence (AI), cloud and blockchain, designed to support healthcare organisations.

Despite these advancements, one critical element—the human blood—cannot be artificially created in laboratories. Blood is vital for life and is required for transfusions to support accident victims, surgical and cancer patients, women with complications during pregnancy and childbirth, children with severe anaemia, malaria patients, and malnourished individuals.

In Malaysia, about 15000 to 17000 blood bags are needed monthly ( Pusat Darah Negara, n.d-a). The demand for blood supplies increases with the increase in human population, the high number of severe accident victims, and the rise in diseases. Due to this call, ensuring a safe and well-maintained blood supply is important. According to statistics, one bag of blood is needed every 43 seconds, meaning that many bags must be reserved ( Pusat Darah Negara, n.d-b)

Student Leadership Council (SLC-KKKP) has taken several initiatives and significant actions to conduct regular blood donation campaigns and programmes. This is a national-level programme that contributes to all humankind nationally. This programme is conducted monthly; at least 50 bags are collected each time.

Based on the report provided by the

collaborative hospital Sultanah Fatimah Specialist Hospital (Hospital Pakar Sultanah Fatimah – HPSF), some of the collected bags were transported nationally and even to the Borneo region due to a lack of blood supply.

## VOLUNTEERISM

The basis of this programme (the blood donation programme – BDP) is to utilise students as volunteers to administer and organise the event. At the same time, blood donation is a voluntary action that can help save lives. Having the right people (volunteers) and skills in the right place at the right time is crucial (Lockstone-Binney et al., 2020).

There are two types of volunteerism in this programme, which happened simultaneously. First is student volunteers who conduct all sorts of things regarding the BDP. It starts with designing the invitation and the poster, setting up the event hall, liaising with the collaborative hospital, and conducting the pre- and post-event. The second type of volunteerism involves the blood donors themselves. By donating their blood voluntarily, they perform a noble action that benefits the community and humanity. Volunteering can contribute significantly to society, requiring no more than 15 minutes per session and potentially helping at least three people. Recruiting new blood donors and retaining the current donors are two significant challenges. In order to tackle these issues, continuous effort and never-ending commitment are a must. Frequent support, motivation, and awareness were provided to promote this programme's importance.



FIGURE 1: View Inside the College Hall During the Blood Donation Program.

## LOCATION OF THE EVENT

Location is one of the critical factors in the success of the event ( Radbourne, 1996; Kilkenny, 2011; Dash & Samantaray, 2018). The Blood Donation Program (BDP) is conducted regularly by the SLC-KKKP to maintain the blood reserves at the dedicated blood

bank. This program takes place at the student residential college compound of Kolej Kediaman Kampus Pagoh, which was chosen as the most suitable location due to its accessibility for students. Typically, students spend their free time in their rooms or within the college area. The blood donation activities were conducted in the college hall, which its capacity can hold almost 1000



FIGURE 2. Consultation about the importance of organ donation delivered by the medical staff.



FIGURE 3. Students Receiving Medical Check-Ups During the Program.

people and air-conditioned.

The event's location is also essential to the programme's success. An excellent ambience with good ventilation and air conditioning ensures that all donors are comfortable. Indirectly, this contributes to the donors' emotional well-being and can reduce nervousness and anxiety during the blood donation process.

## ACTIVITIES

Several activities are conducted during the event to ensure participants have alternatives to the blood donation process. Among them are organ donation awareness, mental and physical check-ups, and HIV tests.

Malaysia's organ donation rate is low despite a minor increase over the years (Alghamdi et al., 2023). One way to increase organ donations is to continue promoting public awareness (Abdul Jabbar et al., 2023; Alghamdi et al., 2023; Cowie et al., 2023).

Figures 2 – 4 show the activities conducted during the event. Typically, a donor requires an interval of at least three to four months before their next blood donation. So, during this period, students are welcome to attend other activities.

During these activities, it was observed that several students were interested in and registered as organ donors. Based on the input given by the HPSF, nearly 80 students are registered for the year 2022. For HIV tests, almost 800 students voluntarily test for themselves.



FIGURE 4: Discussions and Sharing Sessions on Mental and Physical Health.

## PROGRAM IMPACT

Table 1 displays the number of successful and unsuccessful donors during the series of events. Records indicate that up to 75% of unsuccessful donors were women, which may be attributed to their being in their menstrual period at the time of selection. Other instances of donor ineligibility were due to low haemoglobin levels.

After two years of continuous efforts and never-ending commitments, SLC-KKKP has been recognised by the Ministry of Health (MOH) Malaysia and awarded as the Most Committed Organisation for Blood Donation Programme for two consecutive years and The Highest Collected Blood Organisation for the year 2022.

This programme collects about 700 to 800 bags

yearly; up to 50% of new blood donors are registered.

## CONCLUSION

Blood donation is one of the most essential programmes that nurture the spirit of student volunteerism. It cannot be done, and the objective cannot be achieved without the spirit of volunteerism among the respective students.

Concerning the community, the voluntary action of blood donation among blood donors is considered a noble action because it can save human lives.

SLC-KKKP has taken several actions to conduct the blood donation programme. It can be concluded that awareness of volunteerism, supportive campaign, and selection of suitable locations and activities played an essential role in the event's success.

TABLE 1. Numbers of successful and failed donors

| No.   | Donors     |              |
|-------|------------|--------------|
|       | Successful | Unsuccessful |
| 1     | 33         | 6            |
| 2     | 32         | 8            |
| 3     | 56         | 23           |
| 4     | 40         | 10           |
| 5     | 34         | 16           |
| 6     | 30         | 12           |
| 7     | 33         | 12           |
| 8     | 73         | 38           |
| 9     | 55         | 22           |
| 10    | 36         | 14           |
| 11    | 65         | 2            |
| 12    | 55         | 5            |
| 13    | 40         | 4            |
| 14    | 48         | 2            |
| 15    | 50         | 4            |
| 16    | 45         | 5            |
| TOTAL | 725        | 183          |

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