

Malawi Blood Transfusion's "Club 25"

Malawi Club 25 on scaling up trial.....eyes centre and north

"Malawi Club 25", a youth wing comprising young blood donors of Malawi Blood Transfusion Service (MBTS) and currently active in the southern region of Malawi, will this year expand to the central and northern regions of the country. The Service has re-defined the "Malawi Club 25" strategy, reviewed promotional material and will soon recruit a Coordinator to facilitate the scaling up trial. This has come in the wake of an ever-increasing demand for the initiative in secondary schools and colleges.

"Malawi Club 25", established in March 2004, has elected national and regional administrative committees which organise activities and is incorporated as a branch of Blood Donors Association of Malawi (BDAM). Selected peer promoters assist Malawi Blood Transfusion Service (MBTS) to educate their peers, plan activities and in the recruitment and retention of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors from low risk population groups. MBTS assists "Malawi Club 25" in supporting and facilitating regular meetings, providing secretarial services and promotional activities.

The aim of "Malawi Club 25" is to educate, motivate, recruit and retain young blood donors who are committed to donating blood at least 25 times in their lifetime. In addition, "Malawi Club 25" promotes safe lifestyle behaviour as part of the national HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

To be eligible for membership of "Malawi Club 25" a person must be within the age bracket of 16-25 years, must have donated at least twice and once in the past 12 months, should try to donate at least twice a year and commit to leading a safe lifestyle behaviour.

"Malawi Club 25" is being promoted to all young people throughout the southern region of Malawi, in schools, universities, colleges, polytechnics and all places of learning and in the general population.

In addition to promoting healthy behaviour and setting an example to other young people, "Malawi Club 25" provides opportunities for social interaction at national, regional, district and club levels, collaboration and contact at global level. There are positive effects to all members for personal development and leadership skills. It is expected that many club members will become successful professionals and leading figures in their communities.

"Malawi Club 25" is part of a Global Network of "Club 25s" and has been accorded recognition by the other countries. "Malawi Club 25" joins the Globe

community every year on World Blood donor, Day on 14th June, to celebrate voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and honour safe blood donors.

The Service has developed a database of all participating colleges, schools, youth clubs and organisations which will be used in donor recruitment and retention drives.

Malawi Club 25 has over 8000 registered members.