

State-of-art mobile unit for blood bank

By Noimot Olayiwola

THE blood bank unit of Hamad Medical Corporation yesterday received a boost with the inauguration of a state-of-the-art mobile unit, which is expected to help the section meet its promise of 100% blood supply.

Last year, the outcome of donation campaigns accounted for 17,360 blood units and of this, 85% came from voluntary donors.



The mobile unit, donated to HMC by the Qatar Power Company, was manufactured and fitted in the US over three years and is considered ***the latest and largest self-integral vehicle designed for blood collection in the region***. The 12.2m long vehicle contains six private donor stations, each equipped with a world-class electrically motorized reclining donor bed. It is specially designed to meet the requirements of field campaigns regularly undertaken by donor units. At the rear of the unit, there are two private soundproof donor screening rooms, designed to provide privacy for donors. It is here that data is automatically computerized via a communications network that connects the mobile unit to the main donor centre.

Speaking to media persons after the formal inauguration, HMC board of directors chairperson Latifa al-Houty said the mobile unit will make it possible for the unit to reach as many people as possible.

“This is a very important addition to HMC’s blood bank and we thank Qatar Power for their generosity in donating the vehicle,” she said. “We are going to fully utilize the vehicle as we are working in co-ordination with ministries, corporations and companies willing to undertake voluntary blood donation campaigns.” The Blood Bank’s chairperson for laboratory, medicine and pathology Dr Ajayeb al-Nabet and head of the blood transfusion services Dr Zainab al-Fawzia hinted that **with the new unit, the blood bank hopes to reach 100% supply in two years’ time**, adding that the old mobile unit would be converted into a waiting van for donors.

Dr al-Fawzia explained that able persons between the ages of 17 and 65 can donate blood, except for those suffering from health problems such as chronic illnesses, tuberculosis infections and renal problems.

“Hypertensive people and diabetics can also donate if their situation is being controlled, for instance if a diabetic is using insulin, he or she can donate blood,” said Dr al-Fawzia.

Earlier a presentation on the importance of blood and voluntary donation was made before the formal inauguration of the vehicle. HMC managing director Hanan al-Kuwari, Qatar Power executive director Abdel Sattar Mohamed al-Rashid and a host of other HMC administrative and clinical staff attended the function.