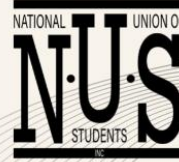


National Union of Students



NUS SUPPORTS LET US GIVE CAMPAIGN AND JOINS CALLS TO REMOVE THE DISCRIMINATORY BLOOD DONATION BAN

The NUS supports Let Us Give and their calls to remove the current blood donation ban that excludes gay men, and bisexual men, transgender women and non-binary people who have sex with men from donating blood unless they have been sexually abstinent for three months before giving blood.

We condemn the current policy on blood donation by Red Cross Australia and the Therapeutic Goods Association and believe that this policy is outdated and queerphobic. We stand with Let Us Give and are calling for this policy to be removed and for Australia to adopt an individual risk assessment for all potential blood donors regardless of their partner's gender. There are many other countries that are similar to Australia such as Britain, Canada, France and the Netherlands that have adopted individual risk assessment as a policy and we believe it is time that Australia adopts this policy. We know that this is the best policy moving forward regarding blood donations because contemporary medical science shows this is the case.

Given that Australia has one of the lowest blood donor rates in the world and regularly runs critically short of blood, we believe that it is crucial that the current blood donation ban is removed. We know that there are a large group of potential donors who are blocked from giving blood due to outdated fears of HIV infection and by adopting a policy of individual risk assessment that screens all donors for the safety of their sexual activity it will ensure blood supplies that are safer, more plentiful and less discriminatory. In fact, estimates by advocacy group, Let Us Give, indicate that by removing the current blood donation ban, it could possibly ensure 25,500 litres of blood being donated. This would ensure over 162,000 lives being saved.

The NUS has written to both the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Assistant Minister for Health to express our views and calling for them to take action in ensuring that the current blood donation policy does not discriminate against gay men, bisexual men, transgender women and non-binary people. We are calling for Australia to adopt an individual risk assessment for all donors. We believe that this is the right step moving forward and believe that it is time for Australia to follow other countries' lead on this issue and support the demands of the Let Us Give campaign.

Sign the petition: www.change.org/p/let-us-give-blood-save-more-lives

To learn more about Let Us Give: www.letusgive.com.au