

Green Castles GAC, Tyrone

Blood Donation Initiative – Saving Lives Over Christmas.

Through the GAA's Healthy Club project the Health and Wellbeing Committee in Greencastles GAC have formed a Blood Donation Clinic within the club. The initiative was developed in May 2016 in partnership with NI Blood Transfusion Service and Ulster GAA's Blood Sub campaign. The Blood Donation Clinic runs every 16 weeks (3 per year). From previous consultation within the community older generations felt like they didn't have the opportunities or skills to help with ongoing projects and this was an ideal opportunity for this group to get involved.

Greencastle GAC aimed to engage all members of the community for this life saving initiative and exceeded their target of 100 donors (minimum requirement to host a Blood Donation Clinic) on the first night (14th December 2016). One hundred and eleven people of all ages and abilities from the community and also neighbouring parishes signed up and donated blood on the night. This translates to 93 units of blood. To understand the impact of this donation session- each unit of blood can help up to 3 people, so the Greencastle donors have potentially helped nearly 280 transfusion recipients throughout Northern Ireland. This was publicised in the local papers, social media (Club & County) and in the parish bulletin. Healthy Club project leader, Darryl Mc Cullagh says:

“Our community was responsible for possibly saving numerous lives over Christmas. It's amazing how doing something so simple can make a massive difference to someone's life”