

Chandigarh plans blood collection centres in malls

Popular malls in Chandigarh may no longer be places for just shopping and whiling the time away. If health officials here have their way, the malls could soon double up as blood collection centres.

Chandigarh, which has been declared by the National Aids Control Organization (NACO) as the best in blood transfusion services, is known for its voluntary blood donation campaigns.

'To facilitate the residents' involvement and provide easy access to blood donation services, Chandigarh is planning to start blood collection centres at popular malls,' Chandigarh state AIDS control society project director Vinita Gupta said.

The city, which has four licensed blood banks, collects 80 percent of blood through voluntary donations.

'Of the 54,742 units of blood collected till September this year, 80 percent has been through voluntary donations,' Chandigarh's director-health services M.S. Bains said.

Chandigarh collects nearly 115 units of blood every day.

The city's blood banks, located at the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), Government Multi-Specialty Hospital (GMSH) and the Rotary and Blood Bank Society Resource Centre cater to the blood needs of the city and some areas of the neighbouring states of Punjab and Haryana.

The PGIMER blood bank is being upgraded as a model unit and two new blood storage facilities will be set up by December, Bains said.

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