

Drone to deliver life-saving blood

The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) and Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS) intend to save more lives by using drone technology to deliver blood to hospitals in remote areas.



The Tron unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) is a highly specialised aircraft capable of vertically taking off and landing, which can transport blood much faster and more efficiently than ever before.

According to the SANBS, the drone will be a South African first, complementing the existing logistics infrastructure. “We believe that this is an innovative step in the history of blood transfusion. SANBS is determined to improve rapid access to life-saving blood products in rural areas through the use of drone technology. Our concept is globally unique in that we will provide two-way logistics; patients can receive emergency O negative blood from one of our blood banks via drone. The same drone can then take that patient’s blood sample to the blood bank for comprehensive cross-matching and then safely and rapidly deliver compatible blood back to the patient” says Dr Jonathan Louw, CEO of the SANBS.

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