The South African Bone Marrow Registry

Overcoming the Obstacles to Stem Cell Transplantation

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SABMR - Background

- Established in 1991
- 1st matched unrelated donor (MUD) bone marrow transplant in 1997
- HUB centre for South Africa
  - Liaison between 97 registries world-wide
  - Provides MUDs for stem cell transplantation
- Database of > 73 000 SA donors
- Donor recruitment
  - Past = The Sunflower Fund
  - Present = SABMR
Stem Cell Transplantation offered in 3 regions
- Total number of SA patients transplanted - 486
- Total number of SA donors donating stem cells - 149
  - For SA patients - 126
  - For international patients - 23
3 Major Obstacles

Committed Donor

Access to Funds

Time
3 Major Obstacles

▪ Since 2018 the SABMR recruits all of its own donors
▪ Current recruitment initiatives by online platform and donor drives
▪ Frequent contact with all registered donors
▪ Involve them in education and awareness campaigns
▪ No cost to donor when identified as match, we only ask their time
▪ 10 year medical follow-up post donation
▪ Opportunity to meet their patient after 3 years with mutual consent
▪ SABMR strategic goal to increase size of database
▪ 73 000 to 90 000 by 2021
3 Major Obstacles

Time

6 to 8 months
*pending donor profile
3 Major Obstacles

- **Time**: 3 to 4 months
  - *pending donor profile*

- Preliminary Search request
- Full patient HLA typing
- Search Activation
- Mandatory Verification typing @ HR
- Procurement
- Donor medical
- Stem cell harvest
- Transplant
3 Major Obstacles

Access to Funds

▪ Donor related costs:
  ▪ SA donor = R 200 000 – R 300 000
  ▪ International donor = R 400 000 – R 800 000

▪ Medical aid often only covers the cost of a SA donor.

▪ SABMR Patient Assistance Program
  ▪ Financial assistance for South African citizens in need of a MUD SCT and who do not have the financial resources to formally activate their donor search.

▪ Launched in November 2018 – already funded 4 successful MUD SCTs
“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

- Mahatma Gandhi
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