

## **PP 56. Factors affecting the 2016 attrition rate of potential donors of the South African Bone Marrow Registry**

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### **Background**

The South African Bone Marrow Registry (SABMR) houses a database of volunteer potential unrelated donors. It was established to find matched donors for patients with life-threatening blood or immune related diseases which require stem cell transplantation from matched unrelated donors. The SABMR exists to serve all local patients as well as those international patients in need of SABMR donors. As a qualified member of the World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA), the SABMR is obliged to submit statistics annually to the WMDA. One of the criteria assessed in the annual WMDA questionnaire is the availability of donors for testing on behalf of patients.

One of the WMDA recommendations is that results of standard requests should be reported to a patient's registry within 21 days of the request being sent to the donor's registry.

The aim of this study was to analyse the availability of SABMR donors identified as possible matches for patients in 2016 and to investigate the reasons for the high rate of unavailability of such donors.

### **Methods**

Donor availability in the different population groups was recorded. Descriptive Statistical analysis was done. The number of unavailable donors per population group was established. The reasons for unavailability of all matched unrelated bone marrow stem cell donors in 2016 was determined.

### **Results**

Of the 456 potentially matched unrelated donors requested for extended or verification typing, 50% were not available for donor related reasons. Although not statistically significant Black donors were found to be less available (49%) compared with Caucasian (47%), Asian (46%) and Other (96%) donors. Also evident was that donors recruited in recent years had higher rates of unavailability than those recruited before 2006. Of the 229 unavailable donors, 13% cited personal reasons, 17% medical reasons, 55% were uncontactable, 7% had emigrated and 8% gave other reasons. Female donors were more likely to be unavailable (55%) primarily due to pregnancy. Older donors were also less likely to be available because of contraindicated medical conditions.

### **Conclusions**

The findings indicate that donor retention needs to be increased and that recruitment approaches should focus on the education and commitment of applicants prior to recruitment.

The SABMR, being dependent on the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) as one of the primary contacts for donors who provide blood samples for recruitment as well as extended and verification typing, is extremely grateful for the cooperation received from SANBS clinic staff who help to educate SABMR donors as well as foster good relationships with them.