DKMS UK: facts and figures

❯❯ Information for journalists

Thank you for your interest in the work of DKMS UK. Media coverage of our patients and donors helps people to understand the lifesaving importance of signing up as potential stem cell donors, and encourages them to join the register.

This document includes some key messages and statistics to help you when writing or speaking about stem cell donation in the media. If you have questions beyond the scope of this document, the DKMS UK PR & Media team are happy to help. Feel free to contact us directly on press@dkms.org.uk or 07734769727.

Key messages

- **What is stem cell donation?**
  - Stem cell donation is the process of collecting healthy stem cells from a donor to give to a patient with blood cancer or a blood disorder.
  - For many patients with blood cancer or a life-threatening blood disorder, a stem cell transplant is their best, or only option for a second chance at life.
- **What does DKMS do?**
  - DKMS encourages more people to join the stem cell register, and works to ensure everyone who needs a stem cell transplant has equal access to one. We also do research on improving the survival and recovery rate of people with blood cancers or disorders.
- **Joining the stem cell register:**
  - Registering is quick and simple – there are just a few questions, and a three simple mouth swabs to complete. You can go to dkms.org.uk to order your free swab kit online.
  - Anyone aged 16-55 and in general good health can sign up with DKMS.
- **Donating stem cells:**
  - There are many myths and misunderstandings about donating stem cells, but it is often much easier than people think.
  - The vast majority of people who join the register are never matched to a patient. However, if you were found to be a match for someone needing a stem cell transplant, in nine out of ten cases, donating your stem cells is done via a quick and easy, non-surgical, outpatient process, which is similar to donating blood platelets. DKMS supports donors every step of the way.

    - In around ten per cent of cases, people may be asked to donate stem cells from bone marrow. This happens under general anaesthetic via a simple needle in the hip bone.
- **Why is it harder for people of UK ethnic minority heritages to find a stem cell donor match?:**
    - Of those on the UK stem cell register, only 16 % are from UK minority ethnic backgrounds. Because finding a match correlates heavily to ethnic background, people from these heritages are left facing longer waits to find a compatible stem cell donor match.

Facts & figures

Blood cancer and stem cell donation

- Every 14 minutes, someone in the UK is diagnosed with blood cancer.
- Only 7% of eligible people in the UK are registered as potential stem cell donors.
- At any one time in the UK, there will be around 2,000 people waiting for a stem cell donor transplant.
- When a patient needs a stem cell transplant, only around 1/3 will find a matching donor in their family. Most patients will rely on a donation from an anonymous stranger that has joined the stem cell register.
- Blood cancers are the third most common cause of cancer death in the UK. Every year, nearly 13,000 people die from blood cancer in the UK.
- Blood cancer is the most common type of childhood cancer. Every year, over 2000 children are diagnosed with blood cancer in the UK.

DKMS

- DKMS UK has facilitated over 3,000 stem cell donations to date, and so far, more than 135,000 second chances at life have been enabled by DKMS worldwide.
- DKMS in the UK has signed up over one million active donors to the UK stem cell register.
- Worldwide, more than 13.5 million potential blood stem cell donors are registered with DKMS.
- Every day, DKMS donors provide an average of 29 second chances at life to patients around the world.

Generic footage and imagery

If you need generic images or video for a media story, or to use as b-roll, you can access our media and assets portal at: dkms.org.uk/press/media-assets

All images, audio, or video assets offered here are intended exclusively for journalists and employees of media companies and not for commercial use. If you have a specific request for materials not included on our press page, or you need additional assets which are specific to the story you are working on, please feel free to contact our press team directly.

Contacting the DKMS UK press team

If you have further questions and need to contact us, the DKMS UK PR & Media team are happy to help.

We are happy to provide quotes in response to specific stories, and can often provide spokespeople if needed for broadcast.

You can contact the team on press@dkms.org.uk or you can call our PR and Media Officer, Bronagh Hughes, directly on 07734769727. When reaching out, it is helpful if you can include your contact details, the media outlet, and any deadlines you are working to.