



The bone-marrow register

A schoolgirl has become the youngest person to donate stem cells to a non-relative. Victoria Rathmill, 17, donated after she was found to be a match to a patient suffering from blood cancer. Victoria, from Macclesfield, Cheshire, joined the Anthony Nolan bone marrow register in February after a family friend was diagnosed with leukaemia. An Anthony Nolan spokesperson said Victoria's donation made her the youngest person to provide stem cells to a non-relative. The charity's bone marrow register is just one of two in the world that accept donors under the age of 18.

Ms Rathmill said: "At first I was like, 'I'll join when I'm 18, I'm not going to make any difference', but then a friend of our family got ill and so I felt the need to join up. It was only a couple of weeks after I signed up that I told my mum. Though she was taken aback a bit at first, she thought it was a nice thing to do, especially given our friend's experience." Victoria's mother said, "It never occurred to me to try and stop her from helping another person - it makes me very proud".

There are currently about 1,600 people in the UK waiting for a bone-marrow transplant and 37,000 worldwide.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-24999170>

