

SUPPORT INCREASED FUNDING TO PROMOTE ACCESS AND OPTIMAL OUTCOMES FOR AMERICANS WITH BLOOD CANCERS AND OTHER BLOOD DISORDERS

- ***The Commitment:*** *By establishing a national bone marrow donor registry in the mid-1980s*, Congress promised patients with blood cancers, like leukemia and lymphoma and other life-threatening diseases, that they would have a way to find a life-saving donor match.
 - Today, this national registry (part of the CW Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program (Program), operated by National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)/Be The Match), serves as the single point of access for patients to find matched adult volunteer donors or cord blood units. Physicians rely upon cells from these donors to perform stem cell transplants that can cure more than 70 otherwise fatal diseases or conditions, including blood cancers and sickle cell disease.
 - The role of the registry is expanding to provide donors and services for other non-embryonic cellular therapies that will improve the health of many more patients.
 - NMDP/Be The Match has grown its registry to more than 19 million donors and 249,000 cord blood units, including 109,000 National Cord Blood Inventory (NCBI) units. Through international relationships, NMDP/Be The Match has access to more than 30 million potential donors and 742,000 cord blood units worldwide.¹

Ensure timely access to life-saving transplants and optimal outcomes

- **Increased FY 2019 appropriation amounts are needed to enhance efforts to ensure timely access to transplant and that all transplant recipients experience optimal outcomes.** FY 2018 funding levels of \$22.109 million for the Program and \$12.266 million for the NCBI remain below the authorized levels of \$30 million and \$23 million respectively. Additional funding to close the gap between the appropriated and authorized levels will enable the program to respond to the continuing diversification of the American population which makes it increasingly more difficult to identify matched donors for searching patients. Breaking down these barriers to transplant is a principal focus of the Program, as are efforts to continually improve patient outcomes. For example, the one-year survival rates for patients has increased from just over 40 percent to 70 percent during the past twenty years.
- **Despite this great success, more needs to be done to continue to improve outcomes, particularly for Americans for whom it is more difficult to find a match.** Additional funding is needed to ensure that every American in need of a life-saving transplant gets that transplant when they need it and experiences the optimal post-transplant outcome, no matter their individual circumstances. An increase in funding will be used to:
 - Optimize systems and break down barriers to expedite time to transplant;
 - Refine targeted recruitment efforts to meet the needs of underserved populations;
 - Empower patients and doctors to make optimal treatment decisions; and
 - Propel innovation to improved outcomes, including increased survival rates, reductions in graft versus host disease, reduced intensity preparatory regimes, and improved matching of cell sources and patients.

Congress should build upon its commitment to save lives through this public-private partnership by increasing funding to systematically improve access and optimize outcomes for patients for whom a transplant is their only chance of a cure.

¹“National Marrow Donor Program/Be The Match FY17 Annual Numbers,” page 6.