

Bone marrow register helps 500th patient

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Prague, Feb 28 (CTK) –

A 16-year-old Czech boy who underwent a bone marrow transplant in Prague's Motol hospital on Wednesday, was the 500th patient for whom the Czech National bone marrow donor register has helped.

The register, launched in 1992, lists more than 32,000 voluntary donors. It is linked to the international database that allows it to look for suitable donors among more than 11 million people worldwide.

"The probability of finding a suitable donor is about 70 percent," Vladimir Koza, Bone Marrow Foundation board president and head doctor of the haematological-oncological department of the Teaching Hospital in Plzen, west Bohemia, told ČTK.

The Motol hospital performed the first child bone marrow transplant from a related donor in 1989. Transplants from an unrelated donor were started in 1997.

A total of 354 child transplant operations have been conducted in the Czech Republic.

A donor is sought for an average of three months. About 20 percent donors are found in the two Czech registers, the one in Plzen and the other in Prague.

About 40 percent donors are found in German registers and the rest in the United States.

The Motol hospital has, for instance, transplanted bone marrow imported from Honolulu.

The patients who have undergone bone marrow transplants in the Czech Republic include children of immigrants from Vietnam, a small Afghan boy and an operation is now being prepared for a child from Africa.