

The Hero Project: Self-delivery notes



****IMPORTANT – ALWAYS PROVIDE A TRIGGER WARNING BEFORE THIS PRESENTATION****

“There’s nothing graphic in the presentation, but you may find some of the topics challenging. We will be talking about and seeing medical equipment and environments (blood, organs and cancer), so if you need to leave the session please do so.”

Slide 1

Today I’m presenting some content provided to us by Anthony Nolan. The Hero Project is an education programme run by the blood cancer charity and highlights the amazing impact an individual can make.

Slide 2

Please use this slide as an introduction- You'll only need to spend a minute or so on this, but it will help provide some context to our work.

Anthony Nolan is the charity that makes lifesaving connections between people with blood cancer (and blood disorders) and incredible strangers ready to donate their stem cells.

For 50 years Anthony Nolan has been saving lives through stem cells. It all started with one little boy - Anthony Nolan, and his mum Shirley.

Anthony was sick and needed a stem cell transplant. At the time, this was a new treatment and there was no register of stem cell donors. Shirley was determined to try and save her son’s life – so she began asking people to get tested to see if they were a match for Anthony.

She soon realised that even those who were not a match for her son could help someone like him – so in 1974, she founded the world’s first stem cell donor register.

Sadly, Anthony never found his match. However, thanks to his inspirational mum, the Anthony Nolan register and others like it around the world hold millions of donors. Anthony Nolan alone recruit around 40,000 new donors every year.

The Anthony Nolan register now helps 4 people every day to find their lifesaving match.

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Slide 3

The Hero Project is the legacy of a young man named Adrian Sudbury. He is an example of the difference one person can make.

Adrian Sudbury was a 27-year-old journalist who died of leukaemia.

When he was terminally ill, he led a successful campaign to educate 16 - 18-year-olds about stem cell, blood, and organ donation.

He believed that if young people are given the facts about what it means to be a donor, many more would join the various registers.

He wanted to 'bust the myths' surrounding donation.

Because of what Adrian started, thousands of young people like you have registered as donors. Hundreds have now donated stem cells and given patients a second chance at life.

Slide 4

Share that you are going to be talking about the amazing impact an individual can make.

Each student has the power to help save lives. Saving a life doesn't have to involve bravery or a heroic act - it can be simple.

I'm going to give you an overview of three ways to save a life - stem cell, blood, and organ donation.

There's no pressure today to sign up - all I ask is that you think about what you've heard and make an informed choice.

****IMPORTANT - ALWAYS GIVE ANOTHER TRIGGER WARNING****

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Slide 5

What are stem cells?

- Stem cells are made in bone marrow, which is inside our bones
- They develop into other kinds of cells – including blood cells
- If someone has a blood cancer or blood disorder, their stem cells aren't developing or working properly
- Sometimes a patient's only chance of survival is a transplant – which means killing off their unhealthy cells and replacing them with healthy cells from a matching donor.

This is where Anthony Nolan comes in – We run a register of incredible strangers ready to donate their stem cells to patients in need.

Slide 6

Who needs stem cell transplants?

Around 2,400 people like Charlie need a stem cell transplant from an unrelated donor every year.

There's only a 25% chance that a brother or sister will be a matching donor – most people get their match from a stranger on the stem cell register.

Most people will have to rely on a match and kindness from an unrelated donor.”

More information about Charlie can be found [here](#).

Slide 7

YouTube link if needed: [Anthony Nolan - The Hero Project \(youtube.com\)](#)

This is our Hero Project video, sharing the inspirational stories of Anie & Ethan.



Slide 8

Could you be a lifesaver? What kind of donors do we need?

- **YOUNG DONORS**

Research indicates that younger donors * provide better outcomes for patients. In fact, they account for over 75% of Anthony Nolan's lifesaving transplants!

- **YOUNG MEN**

Young men are particularly likely to be asked to donate, with over half of the UK donations last year being from men – but men aged 16–30 currently make up just 14% of the Anthony Nolan register.

- **DONORS FROM MINORITY ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS**

Your ethnic background also affects your tissue type, so you are more likely to match someone with the same ethnic background. We really need the register to be more ethnically diverse, to help patients receive the best possible match, regardless of their ethnic heritage.

How do you sign up?

- You can join the Anthony Nolan stem cell register if you are aged 16–30
- Signing up is simple. You fill in a form and do a simple cheek swab... then you wait!
- You'll stay on the register until you are 61, so think about it before you register. You might be someone's only match – so you need to feel happy that you'd go through with the donation if you were lucky enough to get the call

You can see more FAQs here: <https://www.anthonynolan.org/help-save-a-life/join-stem-cell-register>

**Younger donors – refers to people 30 and under*

Slide 9

This video shows what happens if you are selected as a stem cell donor match.

YouTube link if needed: [Anthony Nolan – How the donation process works \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

After the video – this would be a great time to mention that after donation, stem cells replenish quickly, so a donor remains as healthy as before!

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Slide 10

It's completely up to you whether you register as a stem cell donor.

All I ask is that you think about what you've heard today and talk to your family and friends about your decision.

Even if you don't register, you might inspire someone else to do so.

SLIDES 11-15 COVER BLOOD & ORGAN DONATION. THEY ARE OPTIONAL.

Slide 11

I'm now going to talk you through the two other ways to save lives. Becoming a blood donor and organ donor.

Slide 12

Blood is needed every day for use in operations, for emergency transfusions, or to help patients who require regular blood donations to stay alive and well.

- You must be aged over 17 and on the blood donor register
- You can register online at [blood.co.uk](https://www.blood.co.uk)
- You can save up to 3 lives with 1 donation"

Extra information – only to be shared if there are questions around these topics:

- *Some people – for example gay men – often believe they are unable to donate blood. However, the rules about who can donate have recently changed to make it easier for more people to give blood*
- *All donors are now asked questions about their health, lifestyle and travel to ensure they can safely donate - regardless of their gender, ethnicity or sexuality*
- *Some factors may stop you from being able to donate blood, but in other cases you may simply need to wait a while before you can donate*
- *You can find full information about this on the blood service website:*
<https://www.blood.co.uk/>



Slide 13

YouTube link if needed - [What's it like to give blood? \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Play video or explain (only if needed):

- On the day, you go through a short medical form and a nurse pricks your finger to test a drop of blood to ensure your iron levels are ok
- You'll have a drink, then sit in a comfy chair and have a needle placed in one arm
- One unit of blood is taken – just under a pint (470mls). This part takes 5-10 minutes
- You'll be given something to eat and drink, then wait 15 minutes before going home
- You'll have given an hour of your day – but your one unit of blood can save up to three lives
- A few weeks after your donation you may receive a text message from NHS Blood and Transplant informing you of the hospital your blood was sent to

What is donation like? More info here: <https://www.blood.co.uk/what-happens-on-the-day/>

Slide 14

- Register your decision organdonation.nhs.uk
- You can choose which organs and tissue you'd like to donate
- Share your decision with family and friends
- One organ donor can help up to 9 people

The important thing is to think about your wishes and talk to your family – they will be asked for consent for donation to go ahead.

Extra information – only to be shared if there are questions around these topics:

- In England, there is now an 'opt out' system for organ donation, but the advice is to still register your decision and tell your family. **Try not to mention 'opt out' unless asked**
- Organ donation is when one person chooses to give an organ to save or improve the life of someone else
- Organ donation happens after you die. You can choose to donate all or just some of your organs and tissue
- One organ donor can help up to 9 people

Slide 15

YouTube link if needed - [Spoken Word: Poem highlights the need for more organ donors | NHS Organ Donation - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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**ANTHONY
NOLAN**

Saving lives through stem cells

Slide 16

Thank you so much for listening! At this point, you could ask students to share how they feel after the presentation- perhaps by discussing it with their peers.

We would love to attend your school for a donor recruitment event, where students can sign up with the help of our amazing volunteers.

Please email education@anthonymolan.org for more details.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL SIDES

Slide 18

Jacob was recruited by Middlesex Marrow. He explains his experience [here](#).

"It's amazing to know that I've been part of something that has had such a big impact on someone's life. And it's so easy!

Overall, the total amount of discomfort I felt was less than what you'd expect when you travel on a budget airline.

Donating my stem cells through Anthony Nolan was a very personal procedure for me, I lost my grandfather to cancer and helping someone who is in a similar position to his felt incredible.

If you are reading this, I urge you to consider signing up."

Slide 19

Video links as back up if required. These links can also be found in the notes section of each slide.

Slide 20

If you're going to university, look out for Anthony Nolan's [Marrow groups](#)- their fantastic network of student groups in the UK who work in their universities and beyond to do one thing - save the lives of people with blood cancer.

Marrow has three important aims:

1. To raise awareness of Anthony Nolan and blood cancer within universities around the UK.
2. To give every student the opportunity to join our stem cell register.
3. To raise funds to help support Anthony Nolan's vital work.