

Drive on to save two-year-old

ADITI R

CHENNAI: Sethukarasi was busy giving out forms to people walking into the room at Apex World Building on Sunday morning. These people had come to sign up as donors of blood stem cells to help 2-year-old Mira who's suffering from leukaemia.

"The toddler is in dire need of blood stem cells transplant. So, this drive is being held to get as many donors as possible," said Sethukarasi, Donor Relationship Coordinator at DATRI blood stem cell donor registry.

"So far, we have gotten over 20 registrations, but are hoping for more," said Krish Sridhar, a family friend of Mira who with DATRI is working on getting more registries. "We also have a Facebook page called Mira's fighters where we are spreading the word and trying to get more people to become donors," he said. The organisation is also looking out for a donor not only for Mira, but also for 24-year-old Vithiya Alphons, a student who is battling blood cancer.

To become a donor, the interested party needs to fill up

a form of consent, give a cheek swab sample to determine the Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA), after which the sample will be tested and if it matches, the donor can donate his/her blood stem cells to help the girls.

There are over 1,000 patients around the world who are in need of blood stem cell transplant.

"We have 1 lakh registries, but not all are fit to donate. We really hope people come forward to help, as it is only a simple procedure but it can help save many lives," said Sethukarasi.