

## **Committee:** Human Rights 1



## **Topic:** Mandatory Organ Donor Registrations

### **Definitions:**

#### *Mandatory*

Required by law or mandate; compulsory.

#### *Organ donor*

A person who donates an organ or organs from their body for transplantation.

### **Introduction:**

The organ donation and transplantation system strives to honor the gift of donated organs by fully using those organs to save or improve the quality of the lives of transplant recipients. As a result of advances achieved through basic and clinical research over the past several decades, organ transplantation has become the optimal treatment for many end-stage organ-specific diseases. However, there are not enough donated organs to meet the demand. Furthermore, some organs may not be recovered, some recovered organs may not be transplanted, and some transplanted organs may not function adequately, all of which exacerbates the imbalance between the supply and demand of organs.

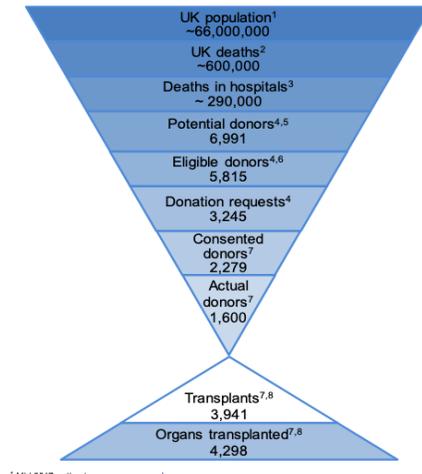
A determination that an organ is not suitable for transplantation is based on a variety of factors, such as the health of the deceased donor, the cause of death, or functional or anatomic abnormalities found in a potential donor or donor organ. To date, organ transplantation research has focused almost exclusively on transplant recipients and on finding ways to improve transplantation processes and post-transplant health outcomes. Improvements that increase the number and improve the quality of organs that are available for transplantation have been slow to come, with most of them having been developed through innovations in local practice standards. Conducting research in deceased organ donors and on organs that have been recovered from deceased donors has emerged as one means to identify new methods to improve the quality and increase the quantity of organs that can be successfully transplanted and thus, hopefully, expand the number of people receiving an adequately functioning organ.

Achieving advances in the quality and quantity of organs that can be recovered from deceased donors and successfully transplanted will require organ donor intervention research that tests and assesses clinical interventions (e.g., medications, devices, donor management protocols) that are aimed at maintaining or improving organ quality prior to, during, and following transplantation. In this type of research, the intervention is administered either while the organ is still in the deceased donor or after it is recovered from the donor but before it is transplanted into a recipient. Organ donor intervention research protocols often assess the outcomes of the intervention through follow-up of the transplant recipient. As discussed throughout this report, organ donor intervention research requires extensive oversight and careful planning to ensure that the integrity of the

donation and transplantation process is maintained and that fully using the gift of the donated organ has the highest priority in all phases of this research.

## Key Statistics

Figure 2.3 UK potential deceased organ donor population, 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019



- The number of people receiving a transplant in a single year has reached the record figure of 4,753, an increase of 20% in the last five years. The increase means that nearly 800 more people a year have their lives or improved by transplants than they did five years ago. The number of people on the NHS Organ Donor Register also reached a record number, 23.6 million, up by 4.9 million over five years. Now 36% of the UK's population is on the NHS Organ Donor Register, compared to 30% five years ago. Survival rates continue to improve.
- An adult receiving the most common type of kidney transplant during the early 1990s had a 66% chance it would still be functioning after five years. Today's report shows adults who receiving the same type of transplant five years ago have an 87% chance their kidney is still functioning today.
- Based on activity data analysed from 2008 for 104 countries, representing nearly 90% of the worldwide population, it is shown that around 100, 800 solid organ transplants are performed every year worldwide: 69 400 are kidney transplants (46% from living donors), 20 200 liver transplants (14.6% from living donors), 5 400 heart transplants, 3 400 lung transplants and 2400 pancreas transplants. Although some countries do not provide complete data on deceased donation, information from around 22 400 deceased donors was also reported to the GODT.

## Possible solutions

- Introduce an opt- out system whereby most citizens will donate organs but some can opt-out. This has already been introduced in the UK it will begin in Spring 2020.
- Legislating the principle of priority provides a strong incentive by signalling to people that registering as a non-donor decreases their chance of receiving a donated organ when needed, legislation of the principle of priority offers a transparent process of prioritizing potential recipients, by serving as a source of external justification. If a person can be an organ recipient, they should also be able to give an organ, and vice versa.
- Educating more people on the causes and effects if organ transplants, where it is appropriate, publicizing stories of survivors, raising awareness for the cause by:
  - Online campaigns
  - Organ transplant conferences
  - Interdisciplinary research towards organ transplants
  - Courses to understand organ transplants
- Creating a fund which can be used by people who do not have enough money to fund organ transplants for themselves so can receive loans and aid through process.
- Organising an algorithm system which regulates registration and consent for all Member of States to avoid disorganisation and chaos.
- A combination of intense educational efforts and improved legislation that will clarify and provide legal protection for both patient and medical professional will convert willingness into action and prepare the way for physicians and all medical professionals to step up and take their place in the cycle - of life.

## Useful links

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470918/> - explains the process and medical side of organ donations.
- <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/helping-you-to-decide/about-organ-donation/statistics-about-organ-donation/> - statistics from NHS about organ donations in UK.
- [https://nhsbtdbe.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/17589/weekly\\_stats.pdf](https://nhsbtdbe.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco-assets-corp/17589/weekly_stats.pdf) - statistics from NHS about organ donations in the UK.
- <https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/93/3/14-139535/en/> - World Health Organization (WHO) statistics and facts about organ transplants and transplantations globally.

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3363073/> - presumed consent about organ donation.
- <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1161/01.CIR.75.1.20>- an article about a proposed solution to organ donation crisis based on a hard look at the past.