



Foreword

Organ Donation and Transplantation is a UK success story. In the last decade, the UK has seen a 67% increase in deceased organ donors and a 49% increase in deceased donor transplants. Numbers on the Transplant Waiting List have fallen year on year and thousands of lives have been saved and improved through the gift of organ donation.

In the last year, we have again seen a UK record with 1,600 deceased organ donors, however this 1.7% increase was the smallest rise in donor numbers in five years. The increase was achieved despite a 4% drop in eligible donors, with 225 fewer eligible donors overall.

The decrease in the total number of eligible donors and the subsequent impact on the number of proceeding deceased organ donors, makes it increasingly challenging to maintain the consistent year on year increases in donor numbers.

The number of deceased organ donor transplants did not rise in correlation with the number of donors. There was a 2% decrease in the number of transplants, with 3,951 taking place in comparison to 4,038 in 2017/18 and a 1% increase in numbers on the Transplant Waiting List. The number of living donors fell by 3% to 1,039.

The organ donation and transplantation community is focused on understanding the implications of the complex factors impacting upon the donation and utilisation of organs for transplant. These include the increased number of donors with existing co-morbidities and the reduction in donors dying from trauma related injuries. Colleagues across the transplant community are committed to working together to ensure that organs are utilised when it is safe to do so.

We want to take this opportunity to thank those people across the NHS who support organ donation and transplantation. Thanks to their efforts, we have seen 239 fewer missed referral opportunities compared with 2017/18, equating to a 35% reduction. There were 22 fewer occasions where families did not support their relative's positive organ donation decision - a 22% reduction, and the overall consent/authorisation rate in 2018/19 was 67%, up 2% on last year.

In last year's report, we said that to continue our progress we needed a transformation in public attitudes if we are to achieve our aim of 80% of families supporting donation. This continues to be the case.

Wales has seen significant improvements in public support for organ donation since their move to an opt out system in December 2015. For the first time, Wales now has the highest consent rate of all the UK nations, at 77% from 58% in 2015. With England and Scotland all in the process of moving to an opt out system, we are committed to working to make the legislative changes a success and to enable more people to agree to donation and enable more transplants to take place.

No lifesaving transplant would be possible without the generosity of every donor and their families, who give their support and say 'yes' to organ donation. We owe it to these people and their families, as well as those waiting, to ensure that we honour their precious gift of life and make the most of every opportunity to save and improve lives.

Anthony Clarkson
Director - Organ Donation

Prof John Forsythe
Associate Medical Director

Dr Dale Gardiner
National Clinical Lead
For Organ Donation

