

## Commonwealth Organ Donation and Transplantation MOU/Charter

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### Ambition

By the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, we will have gained support from Commonwealth nations for an MOU/Charter on organ donation and transplantation which reflects our shared value in:

- the value of organ donation and transplantation to save and transform lives,
- the need to ensure safe and ethical practice, and
- the benefit that can be derived to all Commonwealth countries through learning and sharing solutions with each other about the common challenges we face.

### Background

The global database on donation and transplantation estimates that there were over 135,000 organs transplanted in 2016. This gift of life came from the generosity of thousands of living donors (most commonly through the donation of a kidney) and from nearly 35,000 deceased organ donors.<sup>i</sup>

Yet organ failure and the need for transplantation remains high in all countries. Such unmet need can lead to the death of those on the transplant waiting list or commercially driven transplantation to the detriment of both organ donors and recipients.<sup>ii</sup> A number of international resolutions and declarations have called on each country to strive toward self-sufficiency in organ donation and transplantation.<sup>iii,iv,v</sup>

However, no country has yet to achieve this ambition. The rate of donation varies from zero donors in some Commonwealth countries to 30 per million population in Malta. We face common challenges to increase rates of donation across all social groups, ethnicities and religions.

Using the historical ties and established relationships of our Commonwealth citizens and governments, we believe more can be done through Commonwealth nations working together to share knowledge and expertise. A recent precedent is the 2018 *Commonwealth Blue Charter: shared values, shared ocean. A Commonwealth Commitment to Work Together to Protect and Manage our Ocean*.<sup>vi</sup>

### The Benefits to Commonwealth Countries

- Gaining of knowledge through the sharing of guidelines, protocols, teaching materials, mentorship and training via self-funded sabbaticals.
- Supporting progress in those countries where organ transplantation exists to higher levels, but where there is continued unmet need in more ethnically diverse communities.
- Exploring the potential for commencing transplantation in countries where it does not exist.
- Encouraging Commonwealth citizens to participate in activities related to their country of historical origin, and also share with them success stories from their country of origin.
- Protecting vulnerable Commonwealth citizens against illegal and unethical transplantation.
- Saving and transforming the lives of thousands of patients.

### Commonwealth Games 2022, Birmingham

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games presents a unique opportunity to showcase organ donation and transplantation and agree an MOU/Charter between Commonwealth nations.

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**Notes**

i <http://www.transplant-observatory.org>

ii Lancet. 2011 Oct 15;378(9800):1414-8.

iii The Declaration of Istanbul 2008 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2813140/>

iv The 63rd World Health Assembly Resolution 2010

[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA63-REC1/WHA63\\_REC1-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA63-REC1/WHA63_REC1-en.pdf)

v The Madrid Resolution 2010

[https://www.edqm.eu/sites/default/files/article\\_the\\_madrid\\_resolution\\_on\\_organ\\_donation\\_and\\_transplantation\\_transplantation\\_journal\\_june\\_2011.pdf](https://www.edqm.eu/sites/default/files/article_the_madrid_resolution_on_organ_donation_and_transplantation_transplantation_journal_june_2011.pdf)

vi [https://bluecharter.thecommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Commonwealth\\_Blue\\_Charter.pdf](https://bluecharter.thecommonwealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Commonwealth_Blue_Charter.pdf)