

**NHSBT Board****Organ Donation and Transplantation – Meeting the Need, A Ten-Year Vision**

November 2020

**Status: Official****Summary and Purpose of Paper**

This strategy is the successor to Taking Organ Donation and Transplantation to 2020 and the Living Donor Kidney Transplantation 2020 strategies and has been developed through extensive engagement programmes throughout 2019 – 2020. If the Board approves the strategic document this will then progress to the 4 UK Departments of Health for formal support and agreement for publication.

This paper follows the Strategy Update paper which was presented to the September meeting of the NHSBT Board. It outlines progress in finalising the draft strategy, including work to optimise engagement with traditionally excluded groups and the impact of COVID-19 upon the strategic objectives and the parameters within which these objectives will be evaluated throughout the duration of the strategy.

This strategy seeks to address health inequalities in relation to the provision of organs for transplantation for people from a Black, Asian, Mixed Race and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background and improve engagement with diverse communities to encourage Organ Donation. It is therefore an important part of NHSBT's commitment to delivering Equality and Inclusion.

**Action Requested**

The Board is requested to:

- Approve the final draft of the Organ Donation and Transplantation Strategy, and thereby authorise work that will progress the strategy to launch and implementation.
- Commend the strategy to the Health Departments and the wider NHS.
- Request that NHSBT formally engage with Commissioners of Transplantation and the wider health systems to ensure the supply of transplantation capacity (immediate and for the duration of the strategy) is based on a robust plan to deliver the planned volumes.

**Background**

An update paper was presented to the NHSBT Board in September 2020. This outlined the significant consultation exercise which took place to underpin our strategic objectives and to reflect the impact of COVID-19 and Diversity and Inclusion in the updated strategy. This paper supports the final preparations for approval and publication for a strategy that will guide the development of Organ Donation and Transplantation in the UK through the next decade. The plan brings together strategic objectives for living and deceased donation, including neonatal and paediatric deceased donation and deceased donor organ utilisation.

## **Development of the new Strategy**

Work to develop the new strategy has been ongoing since 2019 and has utilised the knowledge, experiences and ambitions of partners from across the Organ Donation and Transplantation Pathway.

Extensive consultation throughout 2019 saw over 700 participants create nearly 5000 ideas, questions and suggestions. Existing Oversight and Stakeholder Groups were engaged and a Steering Group, comprising of 25 individuals who represented a wide range of interests, were brought together to inform the development of the new strategy. Representatives included a NHSBT Non-Executive Director, a patient lead, donation and transplantation clinical leads and experts in diversity, research and other areas. These formed the basis of the development of the initial versions of the strategy and the iterations of the strategy have been driven by stakeholder involvement and the evolution of ideas, in particular around the need to encompass improving organ utilisation within the strategic framework in a way not previously attempted.

The original plan was for the strategy to be finalised and ready for launch in the first half of 2020, however, due to COVID-19, work on its development paused. In restarting the development work two significant events have demanded the remodelling of the strategy in order to ensure it delivers upon vital developments within both NHSBT/Organ Donation and Transplantation and UK society. These are:

### *The Impact of COVID-19*

The global pandemic had an immediate impact on both living and deceased donation and transplantation. While currently it is difficult to fully evaluate the impact, it will be a part of the UK healthcare landscape for a significant part of the period of this strategy. This is reflected in a less target heavy strategy: those will be developed in the supporting strategic plan, thereby allowing the impact of COVID-19 to be reflected in ambitious but realistic target setting as the decade progresses. This decision was made at the request of the 4 UK Health Departments and is an important part of maintaining the credibility of the overarching strategic ambitions; many of which extend beyond the usual OTDT remit.

A benefit of COVID-19 pandemic is the acceptance across the pathway of NHSBT as a system leader and influencer. The collegiate way in which our colleagues worked rapidly and innovatively to maintain donation and transplantation for the benefit of all patients throughout the first wave was indicative of how the pathway can work. This will be necessary as the UK works through the impact of COVID-19 and continues to work across organisational boundaries.

### *The Need to strengthen Diversity and Inclusion Across the Donation and Transplantation Pathway*

Initial consultations included a specific remit to engage with BAME representatives, including a participative event arranged jointly with the National BAME Transplant Alliance (NBTA), focused specifically on diversity. The outputs from these consultations informed the principles on which this strategy is based; in particular, Strategic Outcome 4:

*People of all backgrounds and circumstances will have access to the organ they need.*

The NBTA was invited to work in partnership with NHSBT to revisit this Outcome and has been heavily involved in the wording and ambitions contained in the strategy. NHSBT is committed, in this unique area of healthcare, to removing any disadvantages caused by conscious or unconscious racism and the work to develop this strategy is an exemplar of that commitment.

### **Oversight and Governance of Strategic Delivery**

Oversight of the Taking Organ Donation and Transplantation to 2020 (TOT2020) and the Living Donor Kidney Transplantation 2020 (LDKT) strategies has been delivered by the TOT2020 Oversight Group, a committee chaired by Elisabeth Buggins CBE DL. The Group brought together the four UK countries with NHS Blood and Transplant to oversee progress in realising the shared ambition to make the UK as good as the best countries in the world in deceased organ donation by 2020. In conjunction with the Stakeholder and Sustainable Funding Groups, this provided a comprehensive system of oversight, challenge and engagement that supported TOT2020 through to completion, enabling UK Governments, healthcare professionals and patient groups to maintain a level of involvement in the strategic ambition that allowed their ongoing buy-in.

The NHSBT Board will receive regular updates throughout the duration of this strategy to provide appropriate high-level oversight for the NHSBT owned strategic ambitions. Elisabeth Buggins has recommended an annual review of the strategy to provide comprehensive oversight and the opportunity for reflection and learning on the performance of each year.

This advisory Group will continue to be chaired by Elisabeth Buggins and will replace the 2020 Oversight Group.

Prof Gurch Randhawa, Chair of the Stakeholder Group, is supportive of the continuation of this group to provide the forum through which our third sector and patient voices can best input into the strategic direction of Organ Donation and Transplantation.

The Sustainable Funding Group, bringing together Government representation and transplant commissioners from all 4 UK nations with NHSBT, will continue monitor the delivery of the strategy. Funding for the strategy will be determined from either, the outcomes of a spending review or, a year on year budget allocation, yet to be confirmed by the 4 UK Health Departments.

This structure will provide strengthened oversight to ensure that this strategy continues to be owned and driven by all involved in the pathway, not NHSBT alone.

### **A Focus Upon Utilisation**

The report of the Organ Donation Taskforce and the subsequent TOT2020 strategy sought to create a step change in Organ Donation and Transplantation in the UK. This was to be achieved through a focus on increasing the number of donors as the means of reducing not only the wait for a transplant but also reducing the numbers of people who die or who become too sick to transplant before an organ is available for them. These strategies have been successful in this ambition with the number of deceased organ donors almost doubling from 809 (2007/08) to 1,580 (2019/20) and the number of transplants from these donors has

increased from 2,384 to 3,760 (a 58% increase). This strategy recognises these achievements, but there is no room for complacency whilst people still die on the waiting list.

This strategy focuses on initiatives to achieve the optimisation of potential organ donor numbers. These changes in transplantation cannot be achieved solely through these initiatives so there is also an emphasis upon organ utilisation.

This is an area within which NHSBT will seek to utilise its position as a system leader, especially in the wake of COVID-19 where NHSBT became a trusted partner of our colleagues responsible for transplant. NHSBT already supports a range of initiatives in this area including the use of novel technology for normothermic regional perfusion of the liver and the transplantation of hearts from donors after circulatory death (DCD). This involvement has developed our reputation for providing leadership within this arena, and the strategy will seek to build upon that.

Developed in collaboration with nominated experts from the British Transplantation Society and following the outcomes of the 2018 UK Summit on Innovation in Perfusion and Preservation strategies in solid organ transplantation, the strategy proposes the creation of a national model of organ Assessment and Recovery. NHSBT will work closely with our partners to ensure organs are assessed, and where interventions can allow previously considered untransplantable organs to be safely transplanted, that those interventions are available and utilised. The strategy sets out the options available for how this vision can be realised, it is not possible in 2020 to state which will be found to be optimal, but the strategy sets the clear ambition that no transplantable organ should go to waste while people die waiting for their transplant.

The focus upon organ utilisation will be led from within NHSBT by the Clinical Team who will provide the leadership required to bring all organ groups and external colleagues together with a joint sense of purpose.

### *An Organ Transplantation Working Group for the UK*

NHSBT recognises that organ transplantation is within our influence but out with our direct control. Therefore, a whole systems approach is essential to deliver the required changes across the organ donation and transplantation pathway. An initiative to address this is currently being considered at high level between NHSBT and the Department of Health and Social Care. A working Group that would define the ambition and set the clinical and operational standards for transplant services is being considered.

### **The Creation of a Strategic Plan**

This strategy sets out clear ambitions for the organ donation and transplantation pathway for the next decade, but it does not contain the detailed plans for how these ambitions will be delivered. To support the overarching strategy, NHSBT will develop a detailed strategic plan that will sit under the strategy and provide multi-year outcome/benefit analysis and costs.

The plans will commence from 2021/22 and will initially set out the strategic direction for the next 5 years. These plans will contain business cases and operational details to support the strategic implementation and will be monitored through the OTDT Transformation Programme Board to ensure progress is achieved on time and in-budget.

**The Launch of the UK Wide Strategy**

The launch of the new Organ Donation and Transplantation Strategy will be agreed by the 4 UK Health Departments but is likely to be in early 2021. NHSBT will work in partnership with colleagues and Ministers within the 4 Health Departments to ensure a mutually agreed outcome and will co-ordinate work to deliver the launch deemed most appropriate.

**Next Steps**

If agreed by the Board, work to finalise details, including obtaining Ministerial support, will continue with NHSBT and partners within the 4 Home Nations. The plan to launch the strategy will be shared once agreed with both the Executive and Board.

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