

Memory Boxes for Donor Families in Northern Ireland-Working in Collaboration with Donor Family

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INTRODUCTION

In April 2022 Northern Ireland Organ Donation In August 2021 I was contacted by Joanne, her Services Team (NIODT) introduced Memory brother was a multi organ donator a few months Boxes to be offered to donor families. prior to our call. This was achieved by the generosity of a donor Money had been raised in lieu of flowers at family who purchased and gifted the boxes. funeral. Specialist Nurse Organ Donation (SNOD) Joanne and her family wished to use these worked closely with family to ensure keepsake donations for Organ Donation and in particular items

Background

Joanne spoke about how much comfort they as a family had taken from handprints they had been given as keepsakes. I suggested memory boxes for families. Joanne supported this idea. We met regularly to discuss and research what should be included in the memory box. Sample items were ordered and each item was shown to Joanne's family for approval. Time was spent researching boxes, colour and size were important. After months of research Joanne purchased the items and gifted them to NIODT.

RESULTS

The memory box is aesthetically pleasing, a simple cream box with magnetic clasp holds donor hairlocks, handprints, forget me not seeds, rhythm strip in a small glass bottle, and my personal favourite "heart in their hand" key ring- The keyring is heart shaped- and contains a small heart in the centre of a larger heart, the idea is that the same heart is placed in the donors hand, the next of kin keeps the larger keyring. NIODT have reported that donor families react very positively to these boxes. Awareness of this initiative was supported by the Western Trust – with over 25K views on social media.



» little heart can be placed in a loved one's hand when saying goodbye...

CONCLUSION

Memory Boxes are an important aspect of a bereaved family's journey. I am so proud that NIODT can offer poignant memory boxes to our donor families.

