

Let's talk about...

Social media appeals and healthcare professionals

There is an increasing use of social media by potential recipients and their families to highlight the need for living donors. For some, this can be an effective means of communication with positive results. However, often the high level of enquiries does not translate into actual donation and the expectations of the donor and recipients through the process need to be carefully managed. Taking early measures and having a clear policy prepares everyone involved and should help manage the unplanned workload for the transplant teams.

Key points for healthcare professionals

- If you are aware that a recipient or their family or friends are planning a social media appeal, they must be advised to speak to the living donor team prior to the appeal. Direct recipients and donors to the information available here organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation.
- Make it clear to potential recipients and families that all donors responding to appeals must approach the transplant teams via the usual channels. Recipients and families should not be involved in the selection process.
- Individual healthcare professionals must never be named on social media platforms. Generic contact details only should be provided.
- Sometimes it is helpful to set time limits and expectations to manage the process. For example, asking any potential donor to contact the team within a three-week period from the appeal, and specifying that if they do not hear back from the centre within three months to assume the enquiry is not progressing. Agreeing a local strategy on reviewing potential donors can be helpful.
- Agreement should be made with the transplant team on a communication strategy with recipients and their families and friends. A clear understanding of the process of how potential donors are assessed in response to appeals will manage expectations.
- In all cases, use the opportunity to highlight non directed altruistic donation and the benefits of living donation for those waiting for some organs.
- If you have any questions, please contact the clinical lead for living donation at NHS Blood and Transplant via enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk.

For further information, visit:

organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation

Call **0300 123 23 23** or

Email enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk