

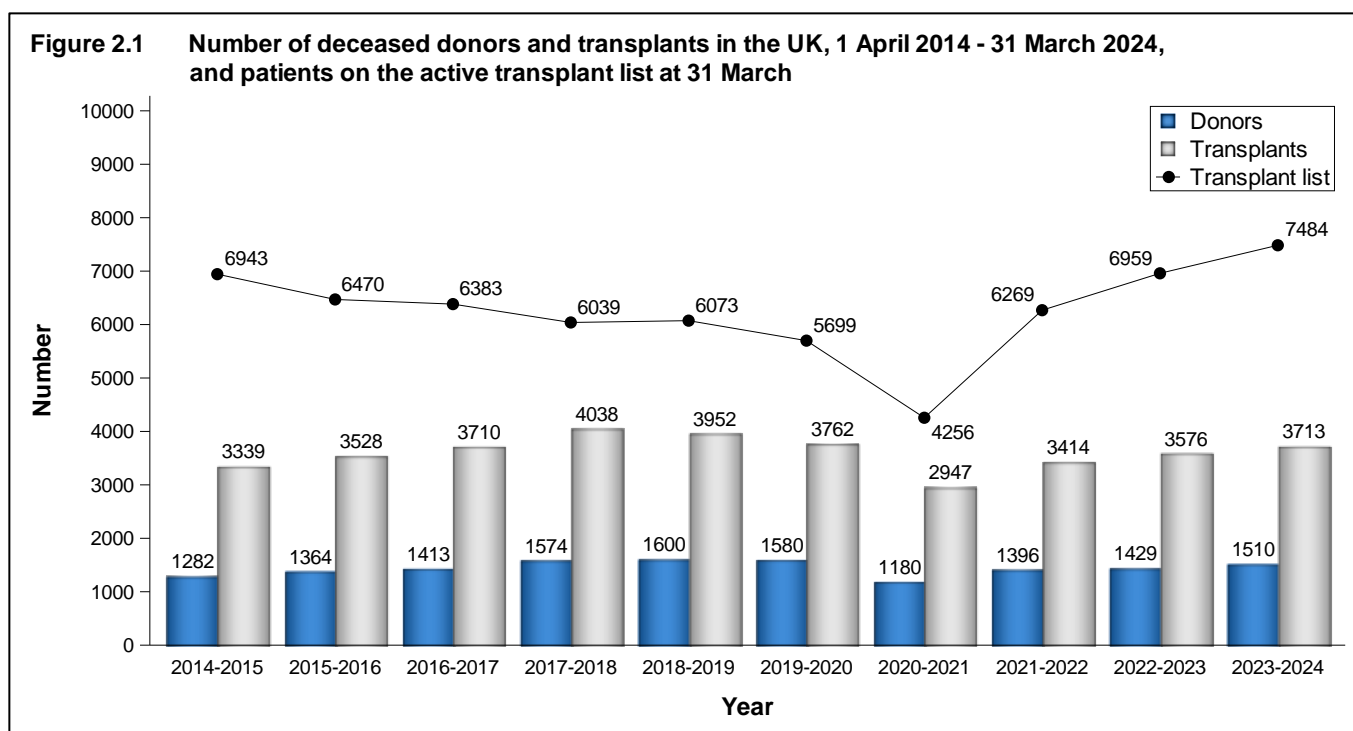


# Overview of Organ Donation and Transplantation

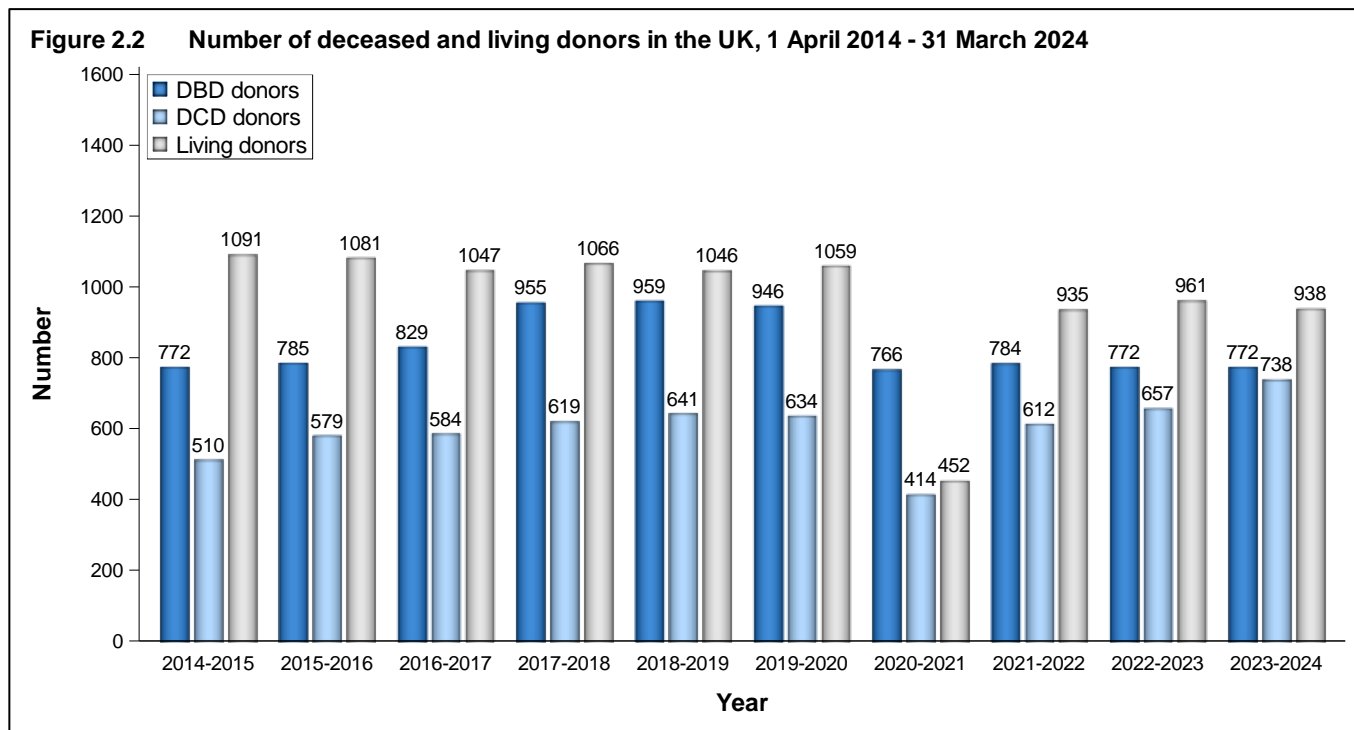
A summary of organ donation and transplantation activity in the UK during the financial year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

## 2.1 Summary of activity

Many patients became suspended from the active transplant list as transplant centres reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and 2021, hence the dip in the waiting list numbers at that time. There has since followed an increase in waiting list numbers and there were 525 more active patients at 31 March 2024 than at the end of the previous financial year. The change in donor and transplant numbers (1 April 2014 to 31 March 2024) and the number of patients registered on the transplant lists at 31 March each year are shown in **Figure 2.1**. There were 137 more deceased donor transplants in 2023-2024 than in the previous year, representing a 4% increase. There was a 6% increase in the number of deceased donors. Despite these increases, donor and transplant numbers still remain lower than pre-pandemic levels.

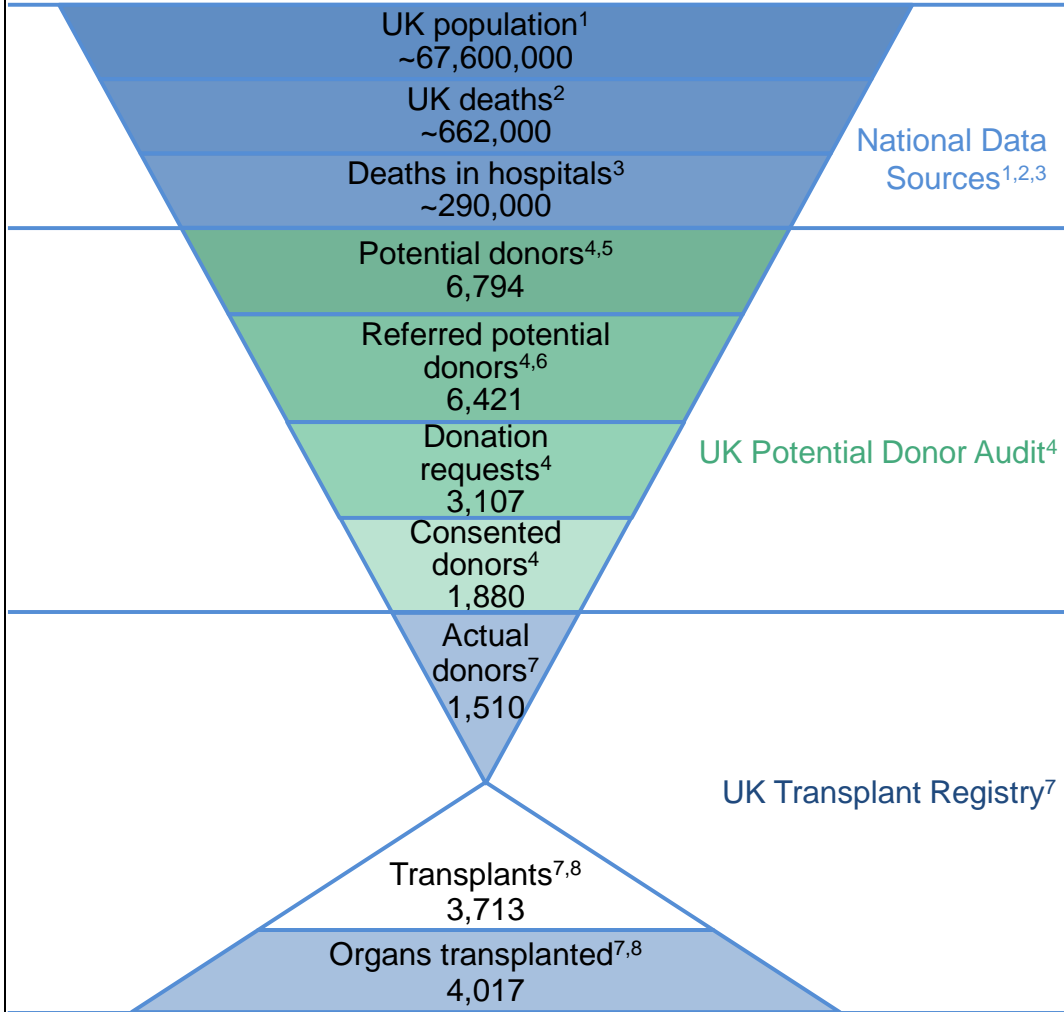


**Figure 2.2** shows the number of deceased and living donors for 2014-2024. The number of deceased donors after circulatory death (DCD) has increased over the decade, while numbers of donors after brain death (DBD) have largely fallen, such that DCD donors made up almost half of all deceased donors last year, for the first time. In 2023-2024, the numbers of DBD donors remained static and DCD donors increased compared to the previous year, to 772 and 738 respectively. The number of living donors has fallen, from a peak of 1,091 donors in 2014-2015 to 938 in 2023-2024, which represents a 2% decrease compared with 2022-2023.



**Figure 2.3** shows the potential deceased organ donor population in the UK. Not everyone can be a deceased organ donor and this figure highlights the small proportion of deaths in the UK that represent potential donors. *Please note that the information presented comes from several different sources. The NHSBT Potential Donor Audit collects information on most, but not all, actual donors and the potential for donation could therefore be slightly underestimated. The quoted numbers of transplants and organs transplanted are those achieved using organs from deceased actual donors in the UK, which may include some transplants performed overseas, and these transplant numbers do not reflect the number of deceased donor transplants in the UK reported elsewhere in this report, which may have used organs from overseas donors.*

**Figure 2.3 UK potential deceased organ donor population,  
1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024**



<sup>1</sup> Mid 2022 estimates: [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> 2023 data: England & Wales [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk); Scotland [www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk); Northern Ireland [www.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.nisra.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> 2023 data: England & Wales [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk); Scotland [www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk); Northern Ireland [www.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.nisra.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> 2023/2024 data, NHSBT, Potential Donor Audit as at 8 May 2024

<sup>5</sup> Potential donor - patients for whom death was confirmed following neurological tests or patients who had treatment withdrawn and death was anticipated within a time frame to allow donation to occur

<sup>6</sup> Referred potential donor – Potential donor who was discussed with a Specialist Nurse – Organ Donation

<sup>7</sup> 2023/2024 deceased donor data: NHSBT, UK Transplant Registry

<sup>8</sup> Using organs from actual donors in the UK

**Table 2.1** shows the number of deceased donors and transplants in 2023-2024 and patients on the transplant list at 31 March 2024 for each country in the UK and overall.

<b>Table 2.1 Deceased donors and transplants 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024, and transplant lists as at 31 March 2024, by Country of residence</b>										
<b>Organ</b>	<b>Country of residence<sup>1</sup></b>								<b>TOTAL<sup>2</sup></b>	
	<b>England</b>		<b>Wales</b>		<b>Scotland</b>		<b>Northern Ireland</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(pmp)</b>
<b>Kidney</b>										
Deceased donors	1138	(19.9)	60	(19.2)	108	(19.8)	64	(33.5)	1447	(21.4)
Transplants	2102	(36.8)	102	(32.6)	172	(31.6)	50	(26.2)	2448	(36.2)
Transplant list	5450	(95.4)	216	(69.0)	485	(89.0)	78	(40.8)	6250	(92.5)
<b>Pancreas</b>										
Deceased donors	272	(4.8)	12	(3.8)	29	(5.3)	18	(9.4)	350	(5.2)
Transplants	130	(2.3)	9	(2.9)	16	(2.9)	3	(1.6)	159	(2.4)
Transplant list	254	(4.4)	24	(7.7)	51	(9.4)	3	(1.6)	334	(4.9)
<b>Heart</b>										
Deceased donors	180	(3.2)	10	(3.2)	26	(4.8)	16	(8.4)	246	(3.6)
Transplants <sup>3</sup>	180	(3.2)	10	(3.2)	33	(6.1)	8	(4.2)	237	(3.5)
Transplant list <sup>3</sup>	231	(4.0)	13	(4.2)	24	(4.4)	19	(9.9)	289	(4.3)
<b>Lung</b>										
Deceased donors	118	(2.1)	7	(2.2)	16	(2.9)	7	(3.7)	153	(2.3)
Transplants	117	(2.0)	10	(3.2)	8	(1.5)	5	(2.6)	140	(2.1)
Transplant list	216	(3.8)	10	(3.2)	33	(6.1)	15	(7.9)	275	(4.1)
<b>Liver</b>										
Deceased donors	866	(15.2)	44	(14.1)	90	(16.5)	40	(20.9)	1099	(16.3)
Transplants	710	(12.4)	31	(9.9)	84	(15.4)	19	(9.9)	854	(12.6)
Transplant list	547	(9.6)	31	(9.9)	51	(9.4)	40	(20.9)	678	(10.0)
<b>Intestinal</b>										
Deceased donors	24	(0.4)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	24	(0.4)
Transplants	16	(0.3)	1	(0.3)	2	(0.4)	1	(0.5)	22	(0.3)
Transplant list	10	(0.2)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.2)	0	(0.0)	13	(0.2)
<b>Total<sup>4</sup></b>										
Deceased donors	1194	(20.9)	63	(20.1)	110	(20.2)	64	(33.5)	1510	(22.3)
Transplants	3130	(54.8)	154	(49.2)	304	(55.8)	85	(44.5)	3713	(54.9)
Transplant list	6427	(112.5)	271	(86.6)	600	(110.1)	151	(79.1)	7484	(110.7)

<sup>1</sup> Country of residence of donor given for deceased donor numbers, and residence of recipient given for transplant and waiting list numbers  
<sup>2</sup> Includes patients resident in Channel Islands, Isle of Man, overseas and in the Republic of Ireland  
<sup>3</sup> Excludes heart-lung recipients  
<sup>4</sup> Organ numbers do not add up to total due to multi-organ donors and patients waiting for a multi-organ transplant

## 2.2 Transplant list

At 31 March 2024, 7,484 patients were registered for an organ transplant in the UK on the active transplant list. A further 3,795 patients were temporarily suspended from the active national transplant list because they were unfit or otherwise unavailable for transplant. Details of numbers of patients on each of the organ transplant lists are given in **Table 2.2** for 31 March 2023 and 2024. Between these dates the total number increased by 525 (8%). This is mostly due to increases in the kidney and pancreas transplant lists, while the number of patients on cardiothoracic and liver transplant waiting lists fell.

<b>Table 2.2 Active transplant lists in the UK at 31 March 2023 and 2024</b>			
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Kidney &amp; pancreas patients</b>	<b>5643</b>	<b>6232</b>	<b>+10</b>
Kidney	5353	5898	+10
Kidney & pancreas	258	297	+15
Kidney & pancreas islets	13	17	+31
Pancreas	7	5	-
Pancreas islets	12	15	+25
<b>Cardiothoracic patients</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>-8</b>
Heart	305	284	-7
Heart-lung	12	8	-
Lung(s)	290	267	-8
<b>Liver patients</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>-4</b>
<b>Intestinal patients</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>+30</b>
<b>Other multi-organ patients<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>36</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>+14</b>
<b>ALL PATIENTS</b>	<b>6959</b>	<b>7484</b>	<b>+8</b>

Percentages not reported when fewer than 10 in either year  
<sup>1</sup> Includes patients waiting for kidney and liver transplants (29 in 2023, 36 in 2024), kidney and heart transplants (2 in 2023, 2 in 2024), liver and heart transplants (5 in 2023, 3 in 2024)

During 2023-2024, 418 patients died whilst active/suspended on the transplant list or within one year of removal from the list. For comparison, in 2022-2023, 439 patients died. This information is shown by organ and age group in **Table 2.3**.

**Table 2.3 Number of patient deaths on transplant lists in the UK, 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2024**

	2022-2023	Total	2023-2024	
	Total		Adult	Paediatric
<b>Kidney &amp; pancreas patients</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>0</b>
Kidney	281	265	265	0
Kidney & pancreas	26	24	24	0
Kidney & pancreas islets	0	0	0	0
Pancreas	1	2	2	0
Pancreas islets	5	0	0	0
<b>Cardiothoracic patients</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>4</b>
Heart	21	13	10	3
Heart-lung	0	2	2	0
Lung(s)	36	42	41	1
<b>Liver patients</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Intestinal patients</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Other multi-organ patients<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>ALL PATIENTS</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>8</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes patients waiting for kidney and liver transplants (1 adult in 2022-2023) and liver and lung transplant (1 in 2022-2023, 1 adult in 2023-2024)

## 2.3 Transplants

As services started to return to more normal levels, there was a 3% increase in the total number of organ transplants (from deceased and living donors) last year: 4,651 transplants were performed in 2023-2024 compared with 4,537 in 2022-2023 (**Table 2.4**). All multi-organ transplants are identified separately as are transplants from living donors.

The total number of kidney transplants increased in 2023-2024; kidney only transplants from donors after circulatory death increased by 11%, while the number of DBD and living donor kidney transplants fell by 2%. The number of heart transplants increased by 11%, the number of lung and heart-lung transplants increased by 39%, the number of liver transplants decreased by 4%, and the number of pancreas transplants (including pancreas only, intestinal, kidney/pancreas and pancreas islets) increased by 6%.

**Table 2.4 Transplants performed in the UK, 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024**

<b>Transplant</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>% Change</b>
DBD kidney	1204	1175	-2
DCD kidney	1011	1126	+11
Living donor kidney	926	907	-2
DBD kidney and pancreas	81	73	-10
DCD kidney and pancreas	40	54	+35
Kidney and pancreas islets	5	10	-
DBD pancreas	5	10	-
DCD pancreas	3	1	-
Pancreas Islets	13	11	-15
DBD heart	158	172	+9
DCD heart	54	65	+20
Heart-lung	1	5	-
DBD single lung	7	4	-
DCD single lung	1	1	-
DBD bilateral lung	55	98	+78
DCD bilateral lung	37	32	-14
DBD liver	523	505	-3
DCD liver	249	264	+6
DBD liver lobe	93	75	-19
Living donor liver lobe	35	31	-11
Bowel only	5	4	-
Liver, bowel & pancreas	1	0	-
Multivisceral	12	6	-
Modified multivisceral	7	12	-
Kidney & liver	9	10	-
Heart & liver	2 <sup>2</sup>	0	-
<b>TOTAL ORGAN TRANSPLANTS</b>	<b>4537</b>	<b>4651</b>	<b>+3</b>
<b>Total kidney transplants</b>	<b>3276</b>	<b>3355</b>	<b>+2</b>
<b>Total pancreas transplants<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>167</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>+6</b>
<b>Total cardiothoracic transplants</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>+20</b>
<b>Total liver transplants<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>924</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>-4</b>
<b>Total intestinal transplants</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>-12</b>

Percentage not reported when fewer than 10 in either year

<sup>1</sup> Includes intestinal transplants

<sup>2</sup> Includes 1 DCD heart transplant



The total approximate number of patients with a functioning transplant on 31 March 2024 is 61,400 (**Table 2.5**). This reflects information held on the UK Transplant Registry database and excludes those patients who are known to be lost to follow-up.

<b>Table 2.5 Number of transplants reported as functioning at 31 March 2024</b>	
	<b>Functioning transplants<sup>1</sup></b>
Kidney	44900
Pancreas	2200
Cardiothoracic	4200
Liver	12000
Intestinal	180
<b>ALL PATIENTS</b>	<b>61400</b>

<sup>1</sup> Approximate number of patients with a functioning transplant being followed up. Multi-organ transplants (excluding intestinal transplants) are counted in each organ. Excludes those patients known to be lost to follow-up