

Let's talk about...

Appealing for a living donor on social media if you or someone you know needs a transplant

Social media has a huge impact on how we live our lives – whether we like it or not! Some people who are waiting for a kidney or liver transplant have chosen to use their social media accounts to tell the world about their need. This is something that you could do too. It is rare to find a donor in this way but there are cases where this has happened successfully.

If you are thinking about doing this, here are some things to consider before you begin:

- Before posting any kind of appeal, please speak to your living donor coordinator, and tell them of your plans. They can help you find the right information and contact details, but will not be able to write appeals for individuals.
- Think carefully about what detail you want to go into about your personal circumstances and your illness – once something has been posted over the internet it will always be there. Be particularly careful if you are talking about anyone else and seek their permission first before sharing information about them.
- Do you want to share your story publicly or just amongst family and friends?
- Be aware of internet trolls – not everyone's comments will be kind and supportive. Some may even be hurtful. Think how you would cope with this.
- Individual members of the transplant team should never be named in person. Please discuss with them the most appropriate contact details for the team to include in your appeal.
- We suggest that you never post your own contact details. Remember you may get 10, 100, 1000 or no 'likes' or responses – this does not mean you will or will not find a donor. The team has a process for selecting the most likely donor(s) from those stepping forward and only those people will be assessed.
- Ask any potential donor to contact your living transplant centre directly and discuss with the team. You cannot do this for them. The donor assessment process can be long and involves many hospital appointments and tests. It is important that the donor is not put under any pressure and that they receive all the correct information from the team so they can understand the process and risks and decide if it is something they really want to do. Even if they want to donate, not everyone is suitable.
- Donating a kidney or a part of liver is major surgery. Only eligible individuals will be considered to minimise risks. Liver donor surgery has a higher risk associated with it and that risk increases with the volume of liver donated.
- Donors may need 3 months off work to recover from such surgery, depending on work and lifestyle.

Above all, remember to seek advice from the living donor services in your transplant centre before you get started and be realistic about your expectations.

For further information, visit:

organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation

Call **0300 123 23 23** or

Email enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk