



## **NHSBT BOARD SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT UPDATE – APRIL 2025**

### **Scottish Transplant Research Network (STRN)**

A Scottish Transplant Research Manager was appointed in November 2023 to establish and develop a Scottish Transplant Research Network as part of delivering the recommendations from the Scottish Government's [Donation and Transplantation Plan for Scotland: 2021 – 2026](#) which sets out a key aim to support research in relation to organ and tissue transplantation.

Since then transplantation and donation has been recognised as a research area by National Research Scotland (NRS). Webinars have also been held to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration among researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders in the field as well as the facilitation of ongoing research proposals. Partnerships and collaborations have also been fostered with University of Edinburgh, Institute of Regeneration and Repair (IRR), Chief Scientist Office, and engagement with NRS Clinical Leads.

The STRN held their first webinar of the year, on 28 February 2025 which focused on “Normothermic Regional Perfusion (NRP): Advancing Techniques in Organ Preservation and Transplantation.

The Scottish Government is pleased to advise that the Scottish Transplant Research Manager post has been funded for a further year so that the vital work around research on organ and tissue transplantation continues.

**Website:** [www.nrs.org.uk/strn](http://www.nrs.org.uk/strn)

**Facebook:** [The Scottish Transplant Research Network](#)

**Twitter/ X:** [@STRN\\_UK](#)

**LinkedIn:** [The Scottish Transplant Research Network](#)

**Instagram:** [strn\\_uk](#)

### **Kidney Research UK**

Since 2013, the Scottish Government has funded a small annual grant to Kidney Research UK to run a Peer Educator programme to raise awareness of deceased and living organ and tissue donation and transplantation among South Asian communities in Glasgow and Edinburgh, as that is where the majority of South Asians reside in Scotland.

There are currently 16 Scottish peer educator volunteers involved in the programme, many are from different faiths. The role of the peer educators is to raise awareness in their communities about the choices people have around organ and tissue donation, to alleviate any misconceptions around donation and to encourage them to make an

informed choice and speak to their families about their donation decision. The peer educators also encourage communities to speak to their local faith leader if they have any queries or concerns about organ and tissue donation.

The peer educator team also create opportunities to speak with religious and ethnic minority communities, often opening debates about the principles of organ donation by sharing the realities of kidney disease and transplantation.

The Scottish Government is pleased to advise that grant funding to Kidney Research UK has been approved for 2025/26.

### **World Kidney Day 2025**

To mark World Kidney Day and the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UK's first living kidney transplant which took place in Edinburgh in 1960, the Minister for Public Health & Women's Health visited the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh to meet a kidney donor and kidney recipient and to visit the Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (H&I) laboratory to meet the staff and hear about their work on blood group and tissue type matching for organ transplantation.

### **NHS Organ Donor Register figures**

As of 5 February 2025, over half of the population of Scotland (57.1%) have recorded their donation decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register. Of this total, 53.7% have recorded a decision to be a donor, with 3.4% choosing to opt out.

**Scottish Government**  
**March 2025**