

NHSBT Board Meeting – 21 July 2026

Written update from Northern Ireland

Organ Utilisation

Discussions continue with Commissioners on implementing organ utilisation recommendations.

Activities and initiatives

The 26/27 programme of work is ongoing, much of which is in conjunction with Organ Donation Committees and Trust Comms Teams to maximise any local opportunities, including local PR and on-site branding at Trust sites. These and other initiatives are summarised below:

- Site visits at Belfast and Northern Health and Social Care Trust hospitals have been completed and proposals developed, which are currently being considered.
- The production of new materials for the promotion of cornea donation to public and clinical audiences is complete and a roll-out plan will take place from July, including media activity and a video piece with Dr Janet Gray MBE.
- *We Are Donors* (Queen's University Belfast - QUB), has a joint plan underway for the promotion of a new video to highlight their role and the importance of talking about organ donation.
- The development of a Northern Ireland (NI) dashboard containing key statistics of interest for donation and transplantation is being considered.

Mass media campaign

Following approval from the Department of Health NI, the Public Health Agency has almost completed a brief for the running of a mass media campaign in the autumn of 2026. Post-campaign evaluation is also being considered.

Outreach and engagement work

A schedule of events for 2026 continues, including a range of engagement opportunities with the general public, workplace audiences, and educational settings.

April-June activity consisted of:

- Presence at six events facilitating engagement with general public and students, including:
 - 150 first year QUB medical students - 94% rated the event as excellent;
 - a North/South organ donor event in Galway with the President of Ireland attending the dedication of a stone from Bangor Abbey, County Down; and
 - two day exposure at Belfast Marathon Expo with footfall of approximately 20k.

Forthcoming large-footfall events are below:

- Castlewellan Show Sat 18 July
- Belfast Pride Sat 25 July
- Running event (Mountstewart) Sat 1 August
- Belfast Mela Sun 30 August

Media

Media opportunities are being developed around:

- Cornea donation – July (noted above);
- Transplant Activity Report / Daithi's Law 3 years on – August;
- British Transplant Games – 6-9 August; and
- Transplant Football World Cup – 6-12 September.

Organ Donation Week

Planning for Organ Donation Week 2026 is underway, with 2 headline events now confirmed:

- Grand Organ Donation Life Cycle – Thursday 24 September, 3-6pm – as per 2025, partnering with Translink to run an interactive cycling event in Grand Central Station, Belfast; and
- Turn the Peak Pink, Donard Challenge – Friday 25 September, 9.30am – group climb of Slieve Donard (estimated 80 people).

Messages, assets, stories etc will be developed in coming weeks, in line with NHSBT's national approach. As ever, these will be prepared into an NI-toolkit and cascaded to all partners and stakeholders.