



Overview of Organ Donation and Transplantation

A summary of organ donation and transplantation activity in the UK during the financial year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

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 200 more active patients at 31 March 2026 than at the end of the previous financial year. The change in donor and transplant numbers (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2026) and the number of patients active on the transplant lists at 31 March each year are shown in **Figure 2.1**. There were 57 more deceased donor transplants in 2025-2026 than in the previous year, representing a 2% increase. There was a 2% increase in the number of deceased donors. Unfortunately, donor and transplant numbers still remain lower than pre-pandemic levels.

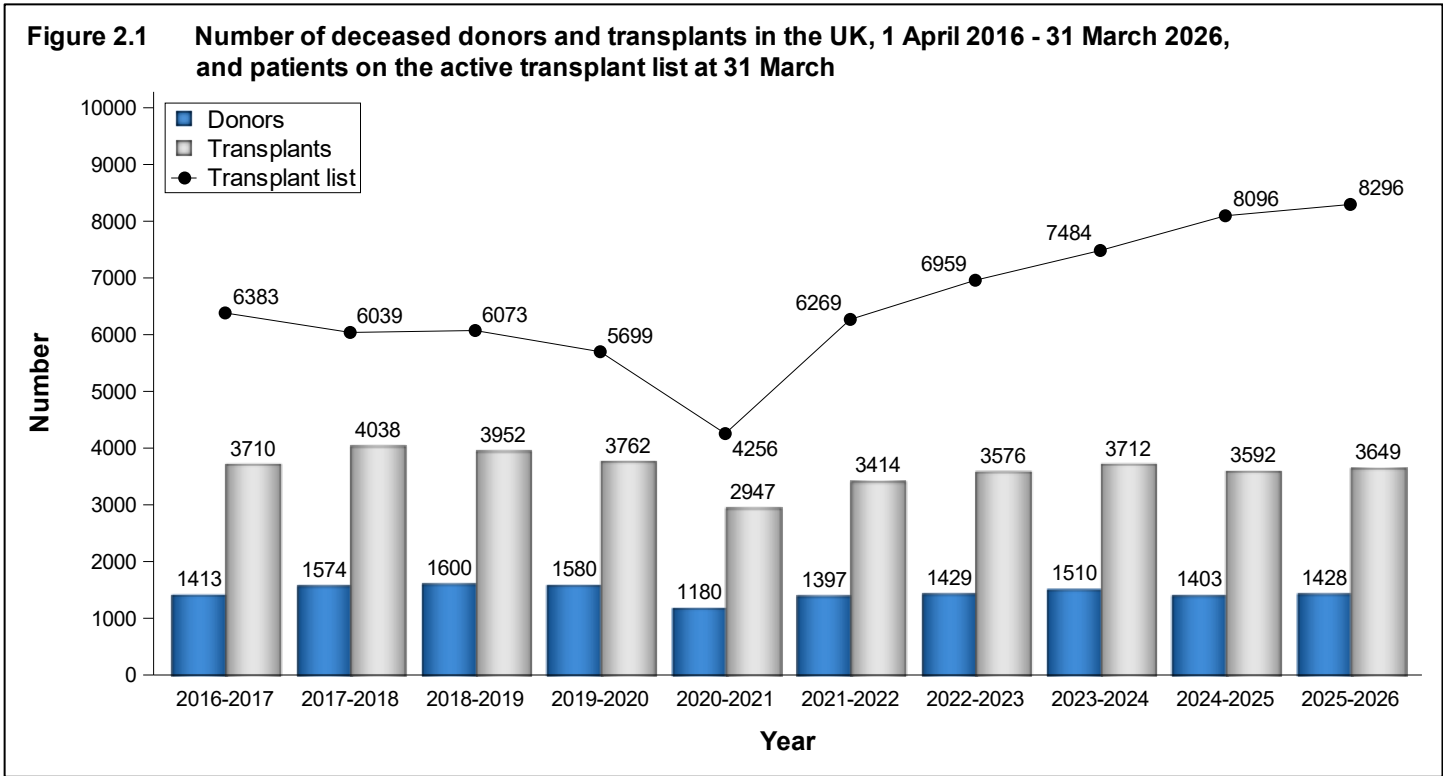


Figure 2.2 shows the number of deceased and living donors for 2016-2026. The number of deceased donors after circulatory death (DCD) has increased over the decade, while numbers of donors after brain death (DBD) have largely fallen, such that DCD donors made up over half of all deceased donors last year. In 2025-2026, the numbers of DBD donors decreased while the number of DCD donors increased compared to the previous year, to 636 and 792, respectively. The number of living donors has increased from 994 in 2024-2025 to 1,017 in 2025-2026, which represents an increase of 2%. However, it has not returned to its peak of 1,066 donors in 2017-2018.

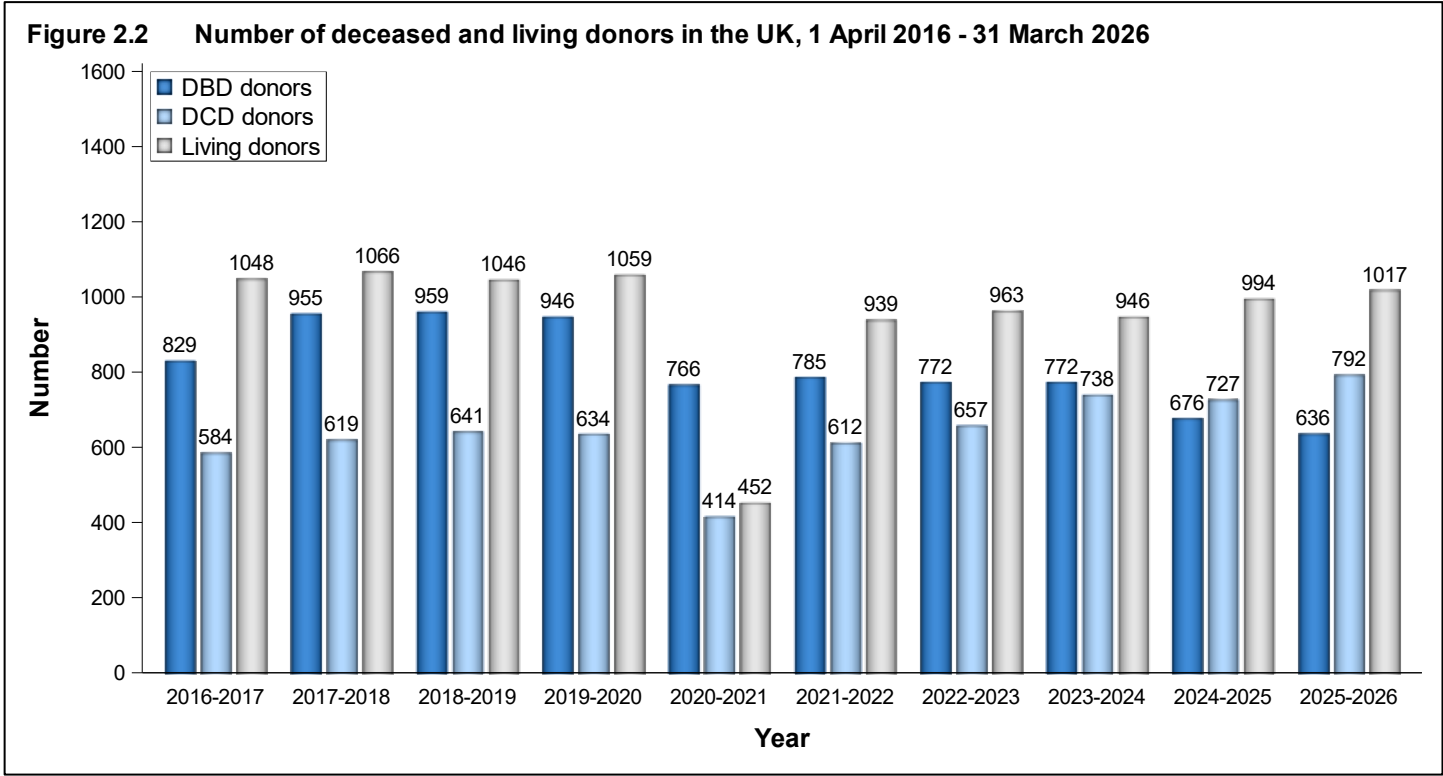
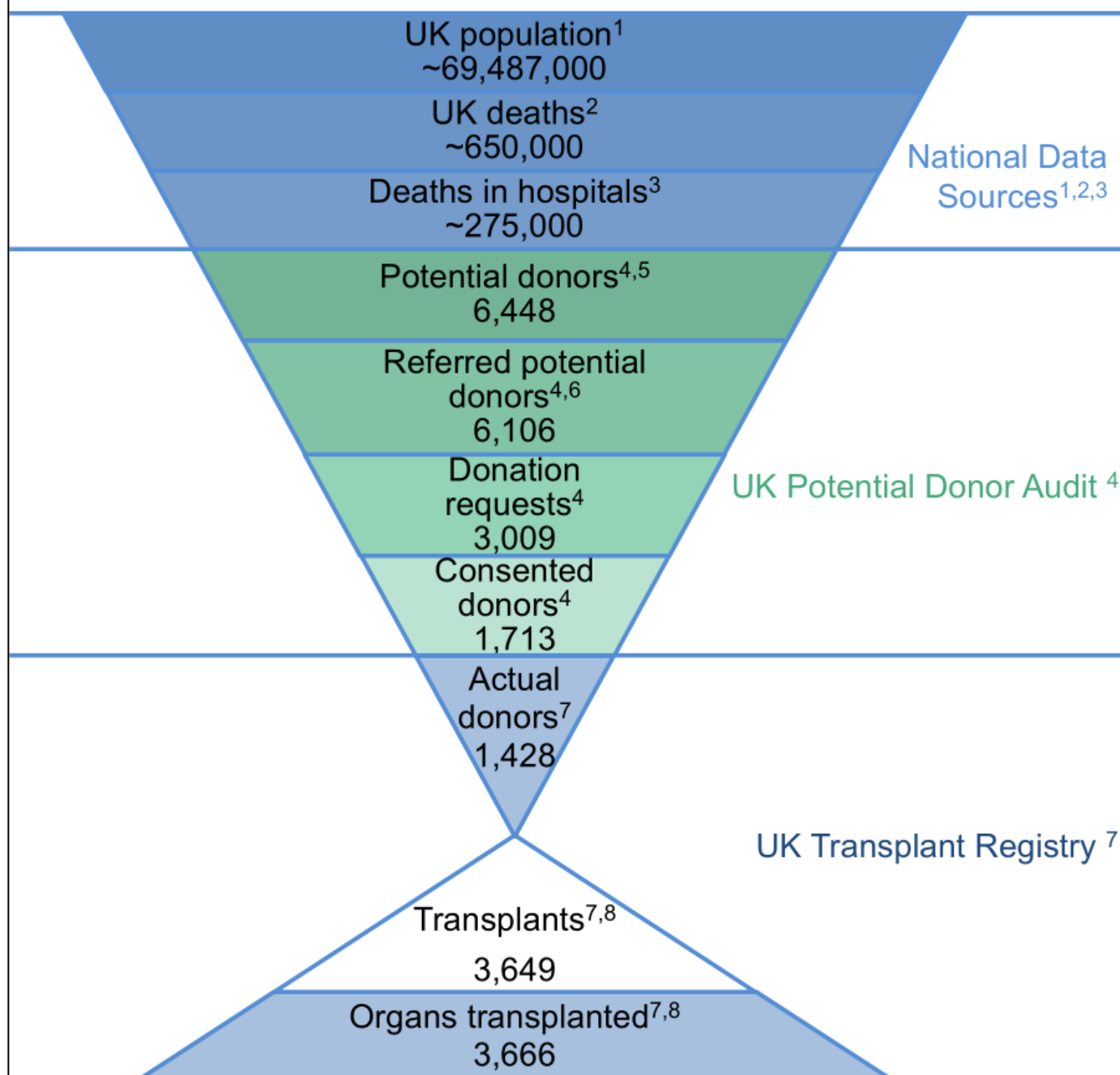


Figure 2.3 shows the potential deceased organ donor population in the UK. Not everyone can be a deceased organ donor and this figure highlights the small proportion of deaths in the UK that represent potential donors. *Please note that the information presented comes from several different sources. The 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 2025 – 31 March 2026**



¹ Mid 2025 estimates: www.ons.gov.uk

² 2025 data: England & Wales www.ons.gov.uk; Scotland www.nrscotland.gov.uk; Northern Ireland www.nisra.gov.uk

³ 2025 data: England & Wales www.ons.gov.uk; Scotland www.nrscotland.gov.uk; Northern Ireland www.nisra.gov.uk

⁴ 2025-2026 data, NHSBT, Potential Donor Audit as at 7 May 2026

⁵ 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

⁶ Referred potential donor – Potential donor who was discussed with a Specialist Nurse – Organ Donation

⁷ 2025-2026 deceased donor data: NHSBT, UK Transplant Registry

⁸ Using organs from actual donors in the UK

Table 2.1 shows the number of deceased donors and transplants in 2025-2026 and patients on the transplant list at 31 March 2026 for each country in the UK and overall.

Table 2.1 Deceased donors and transplants 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, and transplant lists as at 31 March 2026, by Country of residence										
Organ	Country of residence ¹								TOTAL ²	
	England		Wales		Scotland		Northern Ireland			
	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)
Kidney										
Deceased donors	1067	(18.2)	72	(22.4)	84	(15.0)	49	(25.0)	1350	(19.4)
Transplants	1997	(34.0)	111	(34.5)	148	(26.4)	24	(12.2)	2294	(33.0)
Transplant list	6248	(106.4)	290	(90.1)	530	(94.6)	98	(50.0)	7203	(103.6)
Pancreas										
Deceased donors	257	(4.4)	19	(5.9)	20	(3.6)	12	(6.1)	329	(4.7)
Transplants	116	(2.0)	10	(3.1)	26	(4.6)	1	(0.5)	153	(2.2)
Transplant list	306	(5.2)	23	(7.1)	44	(7.9)	6	(3.1)	379	(5.5)
Heart										
Deceased donors	157	(2.7)	12	(3.7)	18	(3.2)	12	(6.1)	216	(3.1)
Transplants ³	155	(2.6)	10	(3.1)	45	(8.0)	3	(1.5)	215	(3.1)
Transplant list ³	231	(3.9)	15	(4.7)	22	(3.9)	19	(9.7)	293	(4.2)
Lung										
Deceased donors	185	(3.2)	6	(1.9)	14	(2.5)	8	(4.1)	227	(3.3)
Transplants	145	(2.5)	17	(5.3)	20	(3.6)	8	(4.1)	191	(2.7)
Transplant list	159	(2.7)	13	(4.0)	9	(1.6)	5	(2.6)	187	(2.7)
Liver										
Deceased donors	897	(15.3)	55	(17.1)	70	(12.5)	42	(21.4)	1127	(16.2)
Transplants	745	(12.7)	41	(12.7)	80	(14.3)	38	(19.4)	911	(13.1)
Transplant list	481	(8.2)	30	(9.3)	69	(12.3)	22	(11.2)	610	(8.8)
Intestinal										
Deceased donors	14	(0.2)	1	(0.3)	2	(0.4)	0	(0.0)	18	(0.3)
Transplants	12	(0.2)	1	(0.3)	1	(0.2)	1	(0.5)	17	(0.2)
Transplant list	11	(0.2)	1	(0.3)	1	(0.2)	0	(0.0)	14	(0.2)
Total⁴										
Deceased donors	1134	(19.3)	74	(23.0)	87	(15.5)	52	(26.5)	1428	(20.5)
Transplants	3065	(52.2)	180	(55.9)	304	(54.3)	74	(37.8)	3649	(52.5)
Transplant list	7118	(121.2)	349	(108.4)	634	(113.2)	143	(73.0)	8296	(119.4)
¹ Country of residence of donor given for deceased donor numbers, and residence of recipient given for transplant and waiting list numbers										
² Includes patients resident in Channel Islands, Isle of Man, overseas and in the Republic of Ireland										
³ Excludes heart-lung recipients										
⁴ 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 2026, 8,296 patients were registered for an organ transplant in the UK on the active transplant list. A further 4,139 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 2025 and 2026. Between these dates the total number increased by 200 (2%). This is mostly due to the increase in the kidney transplant list, while the number of patients on other organ lists fell, in particular the cardiothoracic (4%) and liver (7%) transplant lists.

Table 2.2 Active transplant lists in the UK at 31 March 2025 and 2026			
	2025	2026	% Change
Kidney & pancreas patients	6927	7193	+4
Kidney	6557	6814	+4
Kidney & pancreas	316	329	+4
Kidney & pancreas islets	28	26	-7
Pancreas	7	5	-
Pancreas islets	19	19	0
Cardiothoracic patients	497	477	-4
Heart	303	290	-4
Heart-lung	11	9	-
Lung(s)	183	178	-3
Liver patients	623	577	-7
Intestinal patients	8	14	-
Other multi-organ patients¹	41	35	-15
ALL PATIENTS	8096	8296	+2
Percentages not reported when fewer than 10 in either year			
¹ Includes patients waiting for kidney and liver transplants (36 in 2025, 32 in 2026), kidney and heart transplants (2 in 2025, 2 in 2026), liver and heart transplants (3 in 2025, 1 in 2026)			

During 2025-2026, 434 patients died whilst active/suspended on the transplant list or within one year of removal from the list. For comparison, in 2024-2025, 463 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 2024 and 31 March 2026

	2024-2025 Total	Total	2025-2026 Adult ¹	Paediatric ¹
Kidney & pancreas patients	337	341	340	1
Kidney	313	316	315	1
Kidney & pancreas	23	23	23	0
Kidney & pancreas islets	0	0	0	0
Pancreas	0	2	2	0
Pancreas islets	1	0	0	0
Cardiothoracic patients	64	46	41	5
Heart	27	17	12	5
Heart-lung	2	1	1	0
Lung(s)	35	28	28	0
Liver patients	53	38	36	2
Intestinal patients	4	1	1	0
Other multi-organ patients²	5	8	8	0
ALL PATIENTS	463	434	426	8

Includes all deaths whilst patient active/suspended on the transplant list or within one year of removal from the list

¹ Age group based on patient age at death

² Includes patients waiting for kidney and liver transplants (1 adult in 2024-2025, 1 adult in 2025-2026) and liver and lung transplant (4 adults in 2024-2025, 7 adults in 2025-2026)

2.3 Transplants

There was a 2% increase in the total number of organ transplants (from deceased and living donors) last year: 4,666 transplants were performed in 2025-2026 compared with 4,587 in 2024-2025 (**Table 2.4**). All multi-organ transplants are identified separately as are transplants from living donors.

The total number of kidney transplants decreased in 2025-2026; kidney only transplants from donors after circulatory death and living donors increased by 7% and 2% respectively, while the number of DBD transplants fell by 11%. The number of heart transplants increased by 8%, the number of lung and heart-lung transplants increased by 26%, the number of liver transplants increased 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 2024 - 31 March 2026

Transplant	2024-2025	2025-2026	% Change
DBD kidney	1074	953	-11
DCD kidney	1134	1210	+7
Living donor kidney	968	984	+2
DBD kidney and pancreas	77	70	-9
DCD kidney and pancreas	36	45	+25
DBD kidney and pancreas islets	7	5	-
DCD kidney and pancreas islets	2	3	-
DBD pancreas	3	3	-
DCD pancreas	3	6	-
DBD Pancreas Islets	9	11	-
DCD Pancreas Islets	5	10	-
DBD heart	143	128	-10
DCD heart	57	86	+51
Heart-lung	2	4	-
DBD single lung	2	1	-
DCD single lung	1	2	-
DBD bilateral lung	88	107	+22
DCD bilateral lung	58	77	+33
DBD liver	471	451	-4
DCD liver	309	370	+20
DBD liver lobe	86	79	-8
DCD liver lobe	1	2	-
Living donor liver lobe	27	33	+22
Bowel only	2	4	-
Liver, bowel & pancreas	2	0	-
Multivisceral	6	4	-
Modified multivisceral ¹	7	9	-
DBD kidney & liver	4	6	-
DCD kidney & liver	3	2	-
Heart & liver	0	1	-
TOTAL ORGAN TRANSPLANTS	4587	4666	+2
Total kidney transplants	3306	3278	-1
Total pancreas transplants²	157	166	+6
Total cardiothoracic transplants	351	406	+16
Total liver transplants²	909	948	+4
Total intestinal transplants	17	17	0

Percentage not reported when fewer than 10 in either year

¹ Including a kidney (1 in 2024-2025)

² Includes intestinal transplants

The total approximate number of patients with a functioning transplant on 31 March 2026 is 64,800 (**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.

Table 2.5 Number of transplants reported as functioning at 31 March 2026	
	Functioning transplants ¹
Kidney	47,200
Pancreas	2,300
Cardiothoracic	4,500
Liver	12,800
Intestinal	180
ALL PATIENTS	64,800
¹ 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	