

Organ Donation Activity

Key messages

- There has been a 2% increase in deceased donors (to 1,428) and a 2% increase in living organ donors (to 1,017), compared with last year
- There has been a decrease of 6% in donors after brain death to 636 and an increase of 9% in donors after circulatory death to 792, compared with last year
- On average, compared to two donors after circulatory death, two donors after brain death donate one additional organ for transplantation
- Following changes observed in 2020-2021, donor characteristics have returned to those similar to pre-pandemic and the long term trend towards more donors being affected by obesity has continued

3.1 Summary of activity

There was a 2% increase in the number of deceased organ donors in 2025-2026 (1,428) when compared to the previous year. There was an increase of 9% in donors after circulatory death (DCD) and a decrease of 6% in donors after brain death (DBD).

The 1,428 deceased organ donors donated 4,807 organs, compared with 1,403 donors and 4,605 organs in 2024-2025. This represents a 4% increase in organs donated. **Table 3.1** shows deceased, as well as living, organ donors according to the organs they donated.

Nearly all deceased donors (95%) gave a kidney and of these, the majority (82%) also donated at least one other organ. Only 11% of donors after brain death were single organ donors, with the majority being liver only donors. By contrast, 30% of donors after circulatory death were single organ donors, the majority (88%) of these donating just their kidneys.

Although the vast majority of living organ donors donated a kidney, 33 donated part of their liver. All living donations are approved by the Human Tissue Authority.

Table 3.1 Solid organ donors in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by organ types donated				
	DBD	DCD	Living donor	TOTAL
Kidney only	33	211	984	1228
Kidney & thoracic	10	17	-	27
Kidney & liver	279	333	-	612
Kidney & pancreas	4	8	-	12
Kidney, thoracic & liver	89	52	-	141
Kidney, thoracic & pancreas	3	5	-	8
Kidney, liver & pancreas	72	65	-	137
Kidney, liver, pancreas & bowel	3	-	-	3
Kidney, thoracic, liver & pancreas	85	66	-	151
Kidney, thoracic, liver, pancreas & bowel	15	-	-	15
Thoracic only	4	6	-	10
Thoracic & liver	3	4	-	7
Thoracic, liver & pancreas	1	1	-	2
Liver only	35	23	33	91
Liver & pancreas	-	1	-	1
TOTAL	636	792	1017	2445
Bowel may include abdominal wall/colon/stomach/spleen				

3.2 Organ donors

Organ donor rates per million population (pmp) for 2025-2026 are given by country and NHS region according to where the donor lived in **Table 3.2**, while the numbers of deceased donors are shown based on location of the hospital in which they died in **Table 3.3**. **Table 3.4** shows the number of deceased donors by Organ Donation Services Team. **Appendix I** shows a more detailed breakdown of the number of donors from the donating hospitals and **Appendix III** details the populations used. Number and rates of utilised donors are given in Chapter 4.

Table 3.2 Organ donation rates per million population (pmp), in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by country/ NHS region of donor residence							
Country/ NHS region of residence	DBD		DCD		TOTAL		Living
	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N (pmp)
North East and Yorkshire	83	(9.8)	99	(11.7)	182	(21.5)	98 (11.6)
North West	55	(7.1)	61	(7.9)	116	(15.0)	81 (10.5)
Midlands	93	(8.3)	100	(8.9)	193	(17.1)	101 (9.0)
East of England	71	(10.8)	114	(17.3)	185	(28.1)	56 (8.5)
London	68	(7.5)	54	(5.9)	122	(13.4)	82 (9.0)
South East	72	(7.5)	118	(12.2)	190	(19.7)	126 (13.1)
South West	60	(10.1)	86	(14.5)	146	(24.7)	75 (12.7)
England	502	(8.5)	632	(10.8)	1134	(19.3)	619 (10.5)
Isle of Man	1	(12.5)	2	(25.0)	3	(37.5)	1 (12.5)
Channel Islands	3	(17.6)	2	(11.8)	5	(29.4)	1 (5.9)
Wales	35	(10.9)	39	(12.1)	74	(23.0)	40 (12.4)
Scotland	29	(5.2)	58	(10.4)	87	(15.5)	61 (10.9)
Northern Ireland	26	(13.3)	26	(13.3)	52	(26.5)	48 (24.5)
TOTAL¹	636	(9.2)	792	(11.4)	1428	(20.5)	997 (14.3)

¹ Includes 300 donors (40 DBD, 33 DCD and 227 living) with an unknown UK postcode and excludes 20 living donors resident outside the UK

Table 3.2 shows variation in the number of DBD and DCD donors pmp across the UK. There were 9.2 DBD donors pmp for the UK as a whole, but across NHS regions this ranged between 7.1 and 10.8 pmp. Across the four countries of the UK, Northern Ireland had the highest rate of 13.3 pmp. However, the number of eligible donors pmp also varies and further information can be seen in Chapter 13. It should be noted that these figures are not directly comparable, since not all donors are reported in the Potential Donor Audit. For DCD donors the UK rate is 11.4 pmp, and Northern Ireland had the highest rate of 13.3 pmp across countries of the UK, and across NHS regions it ranged from 5.9 to 17.3 pmp. No adjustment has been made for any differences in demographics of the populations across countries or NHS regions.

Table 3.3 Deceased organ donors in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by country/ NHS region of hospital of donor death			
Country of donation/ NHS region	DBD N	DCD N	TOTAL N
North East and Yorkshire	85	104	189
North West	57	64	121
Midlands	91	102	193
East of England	71	109	180
London	103	83	186
South East	59	116	175
South West	68	84	152
England	534	662	1196
Isle of Man	1	1	2
Channel Islands	3	2	5
Wales	38	37	75
Scotland	33	63	96
Northern Ireland	27	27	54
TOTAL	636	792	1428

Table 3.4 Deceased organ donors in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026 by Organ Donation Services Team			
Team	DBD N	DCD N	TOTAL N
Eastern	83	124	207
London	74	54	128
Midlands	67	88	155
North West	65	71	136
Northern	40	45	85
Northern Ireland	27	27	54
Scotland	33	63	96
South Central	44	63	107
South East	51	85	136
South Wales	35	31	66
South West	64	77	141
Yorkshire	53	64	117
TOTAL	636	792	1428

The mean number of organs retrieved per donor in 2025-2026 is given by country in **Table 3.5**. Overall, an average of 3.6 organs were donated per DBD donor and 3.1 per DCD donor. These rates ranged from 3.5 (DBD) and 3.0 (DCD) organs per donor in Wales, to 4.1 (DBD) and 3.2 (DCD) in Scotland.

Table 3.5 Organs retrieved per donor, in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by country of donor residence									
Country	DBD	Adult DCD	TOTAL	DBD	Paediatric DCD	TOTAL	DBD	All DCD	TOTAL
England	3.6	3.1	3.3	5.4	4.8	5.0	3.6	3.1	3.4
Wales	3.5	2.9	3.2	-	6.0	6.0	3.5	3.0	3.3
Scotland	4.0	3.2	3.5	8.0	1.0	4.5	4.1	3.2	3.5
Northern Ireland	3.9	3.0	3.4	-	-	-	3.9	3.0	3.4
TOTAL	3.6	3.1	3.3	5.6	4.6	5.0	3.6	3.1	3.4

3.3 Demographic characteristics

It is important to be aware that there have been changes over time with regard to donor characteristics, summarised for 2025-2026 in **Table 3.6**. In 2025-2026, the number of DCD donors exceeded DBD donors and 43% of deceased donors were aged 60 years or more (**Figure 3.1**). The proportion of clinically obese donors (Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or higher) has increased from 24% to 31% of deceased donors in the last 10 years (**Figure 3.2**). In absolute numbers, this represents approximately 100 more donors in the 30+ BMI category in 2025-2026 than in 2016-2017. In addition, the proportion of all deceased donors after a trauma death has remained the same at 3% over the same time period. Trends towards more obese deceased donors and those with non-trauma related deaths may all have an adverse impact on the quality and utilisation of the organs, and the subsequent transplant outcome for the recipient.

Table 3.6 also indicates the ethnicity of deceased organ donors, highlighting that 7% of donors are from the Black, Asian and minority ethnic community. By contrast, these communities are estimated to represent 18% of the UK population.

Table 3.6		Demographic characteristics of organ donors in the UK					
		1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026					
		DBD		DCD		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	0-17	12	2	18	2	30	2
	18-49	259	41	222	28	481	34
	50-59	127	20	177	22	304	21
	60-69	148	23	210	27	358	25
	70+	90	14	165	21	255	18
	Mean (SD)	52	(16)	56	(16)	54	(16)
BMI	0-19	43	7	50	6	93	7
	20-29	403	63	495	63	898	63
	30+	190	30	247	31	437	31
	Mean (SD)	28	(6)	28	(6)	28	(6)
Cause of death	Intracranial	586	92	668	84	1254	88
	Trauma	7	1	24	3	31	2
	Other	43	7	100	13	143	10
Ethnicity	White	550	90	723	95	1273	93
	Asian	34	6	21	3	55	4
	Black	14	2	10	1	24	2
	Other	14	2	7	1	21	2
	Unknown	24	0	31	0	55	0
Blood group	O	281	44	376	48	657	46
	A	263	41	329	42	592	42
	B	72	11	66	8	138	10
	AB	19	3	20	3	39	3
	Unknown	1	0	1	0	2	0
Donor sex	Male	346	54	503	64	849	59
	Female	290	46	289	38	579	41
TOTAL		636	100	792	100	1428	100

Figure 3.1 Age of deceased donors in the UK, 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2026

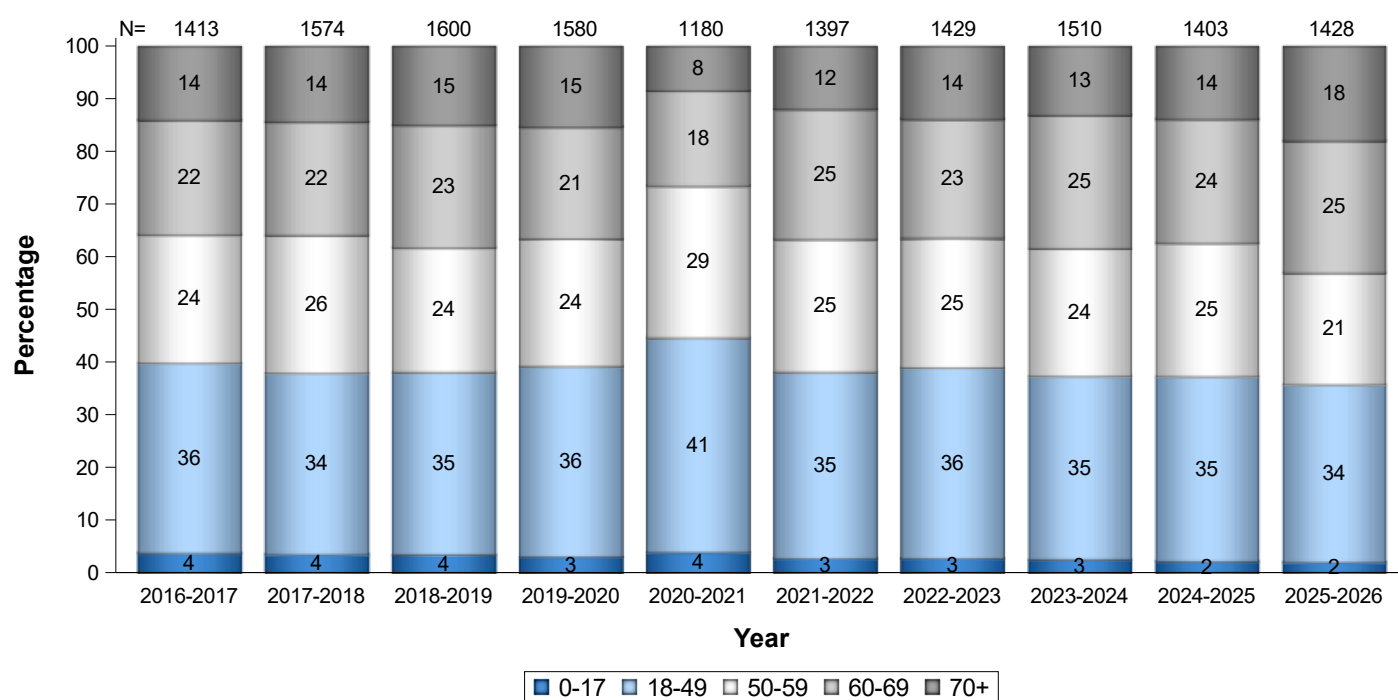


Figure 3.2 BMI of deceased donors in the UK, 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2026

