

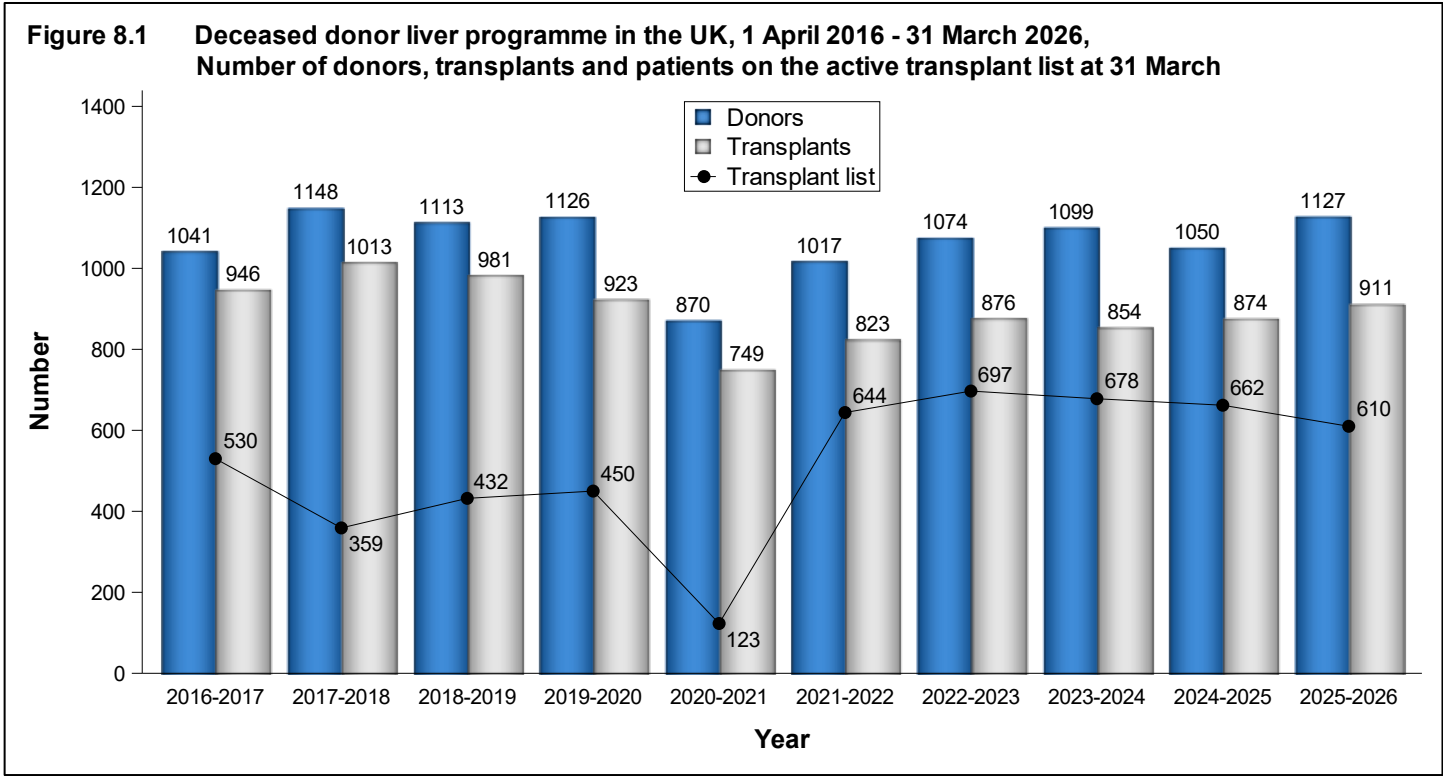
Liver Activity

Key messages

- The number of patients on the active liver transplant list at 31 March 2026 was 610, a decrease of 8% from 2025
- The number of liver donors after brain death fell by 5% to 582, while transplants from donors after brain death fell by 4% to 537
- The number of liver donors after circulatory death increased by 24% to 545, while transplants from donors after circulatory death increased by 19% to 374 which was the highest ever number of DCD liver transplants performed in a financial year

8.1 Overview

The number of deceased liver donors and transplants in the UK in the last ten years is shown in **Figure 8.1**. There has been a decrease in the number of patients registered on the active liver transplant list between 2022-2023 and 2025-2026 but the number of patients active remains higher than pre-pandemic levels. An increase in donors was seen last year and in the previous three years the numbers of donors had steadily increased to similar numbers pre pandemic.



Intestinal transplants that used a liver are not included in the liver transplant activity reported. However, any livers retrieved and used for such transplants are included in the liver donor activity. Liver only transplants in intestinal failure patients are included in the liver transplant activity. Intestinal transplant activity is reported in Chapter 9.

The number of deceased donors, deceased and living donor transplants, and patients on the active transplant list, by centre, is shown in **Table 8.1**. The numbers of liver donors reflect the number of organs retrieved from within each centre’s allocation zone (by any retrieval team) rather than the number of retrievals made by that centre. In 2025-2026, 1,127 organ donors donated their liver for transplant: 582 donors after brain death and 545 donors after circulatory death. There were 610 patients on the active transplant list at 31 March 2026, a decrease of 8% from 31 March 2025.



Overall, the number of liver transplants (either whole liver or liver lobe transplants) from donors after brain death fell by 4% to 537 whilst the number of liver transplants from donors after circulatory death increased by 19% to 374, compared with the previous financial year. Additionally, there were 33 living liver lobe donor transplants (NHS Group 1: 22 and Group 2: 11).

Patients are prioritised as super-urgent if they require a new liver as soon as possible due to rapid failure of the organ. Other patients are referred to as elective. In 2025-2026, there were 73 deceased donor adult super-urgent transplants, representing 9% of all adult deceased donor transplants and 5 deceased donor paediatric super-urgent transplants, representing 8% of all paediatric deceased donor transplants.

Table 8.1 Deceased and living liver donors and transplants, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026 (2024-2025) and transplant list patients at 31 March 2026 (2025) in the UK, by age group and centre

Allocation zone/ transplant centre	Deceased donors ¹						Deceased transplants						Living donor transplants		Active transplant list	
	DBD		DCD		TOTAL		DBD		DCD		TOTAL					
Adult																
Birmingham	109	(134)	102	(94)	211	(228)	99	(96)	65	(87)	164	(183)	0	(0)	146	(160)
Cambridge	70	(50)	75	(66)	145	(116)	50	(52)	63	(59)	113	(111)	0	(0)	45	(43)
Edinburgh	62	(71)	72	(57)	134	(128)	43	(40)	36	(26)	79	(66)	0	(0)	64	(62)
King's College	131	(152)	125	(100)	256	(252)	123	(103)	114	(53)	237	(156)	5	(0)	146	(189)
Leeds	107	(97)	83	(65)	190	(162)	71	(87)	33	(19)	104	(106)	5	(3)	78	(75)
Newcastle	30	(39)	27	(16)	57	(55)	15	(29)	15	(21)	30	(50)	0	(0)	10	(9)
Royal Free	68	(59)	51	(35)	119	(94)	76	(84)	43	(44)	119	(128)	0	(1)	55	(46)
TOTAL	577	(602)	535	(433)	1112	(1035)	477	(491)	369	(309)	846	(800)	14 ^{2,6}	(9) ^{3,7}	544	(584)
Paediatric																
Birmingham	0	(3)	3	(1)	3	(4)	14	(21)	3	(1)	17	(22)	0	(0)	17	(24)
Cambridge	1	(0)	0	(1)	1	(1)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(1)	0	(0)	-	-
Edinburgh	1	(0)	0	(0)	1	(0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
King's College	1	(1)	1	(1)	2	(2)	30	(36)	2	(2)	32	(38)	16	(12)	38	(44)
Leeds	2	(4)	5	(1)	7	(5)	16	(13)	0	(0)	16	(13)	3	(6)	11	(10)
Newcastle	0	(0)	1	(1)	1	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Royal Free	0	(2)	0	(0)	0	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	5	(10)	10	(5)	15	(15)	60	(70)	5	(4)	65	(74)	19 ⁴	(18) ⁵	66	(78)

¹ Includes donors whose livers were retrieved by other teams

² Includes 9 and 5 living liver lobe transplants in NHS Group 1 and Group 2 recipients, respectively

³ Includes 4 and 5 living liver lobe transplants in NHS Group 1 and Group 2 recipients, respectively

⁴ Includes 13 and 6 living liver lobe transplants in NHS Group 1 and Group 2 recipients, respectively

⁵ Includes 12 and 6 living liver lobe transplants in NHS Group 1 and Group 2 recipients, respectively

⁶ Includes 1 transplant at London Cromwell and 3 transplants at London Bridge involving private patients

⁷ Includes 1 transplant at London Cromwell and 4 transplants at London Bridge involving private patients

8.2 Transplant list

During 2025-2026, 1,127 patients joined the liver transplant list. Outcomes for patients on the list at 1 April 2025 and those joining the list during the year are shown in **Table 8.2**. There have been 109 (10%) new registrations that were super-urgent.

Table 8.2 Liver transplant list and new registrations in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026						
Outcome of patient at 31 March 2026	Active and suspended patients at 1 April 2025		New registrations in 2025-2026¹		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Remained active/suspended	292	37	430	38	722	38
Transplanted	343	44	598	53	941	49
Removed ²	83	11	37	3	120	6
Died ³	61	8	62	6	123	6
TOTAL	779		1127		1906	

¹ Includes re-registrations for second or subsequent patients
² Includes 26 patients removed and re-registered at a different centre or on different pathway
³ Includes removals due to deteriorating condition and patients who died within 30 days of removal

Table 8.3 shows the active transplant list in the UK at 31 March 2026 and 2025 by country/NHS region of patient's residence. At 31 March 2026, the overall rate was 8.8 pmp and ranged from 5.7 to 9.6 pmp across English NHS regions.

Table 8.3 Active liver transplant list at 31 March by Country/NHS region of patient residence				
Country/ NHS region of residence	Liver transplant list (pmp)			
	2026		2025	
North East and Yorkshire	48	(5.7)	51	(6.0)
North West	74	(9.6)	75	(9.7)
Midlands	102	(9.1)	121	(10.7)
East of England	61	(9.3)	45	(6.8)
London	71	(7.8)	85	(9.3)
South East	69	(7.2)	73	(7.6)
South West	56	(9.5)	64	(10.8)
England	481	(8.2)	514	(8.8)
Isle of Man	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
Channel Islands	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
Wales	30	(9.3)	33	(10.2)
Scotland	69	(12.3)	67	(12.0)
Northern Ireland	22	(11.2)	39	(19.9)
TOTAL¹	610	(8.8)	662	(9.5)
¹ Includes patients in 2026 (2025) residing in: Unspecified UK 0 (1); Republic of Ireland 8 (8)				

An indication of longer term outcomes for patients listed for a liver transplant is summarised in **Figure 8.2**. This shows the proportion of patients transplanted or still waiting six months, one year and two years after joining the transplant list. It also shows the proportion removed from the transplant list and those dying while on the transplant list (which includes those patients removed due to condition deteriorated). At one year post-registration, 63% of patients had received a liver transplant while 7% of patients had died whilst waiting or had been removed due to their condition deteriorating. 4% had been removed for other reasons such as the patient's condition improving, or as a result of non-compliance or at the request of the patient or family.

Figure 8.2 Post-registration outcome for 1008 new elective liver only registrations made in the UK, 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

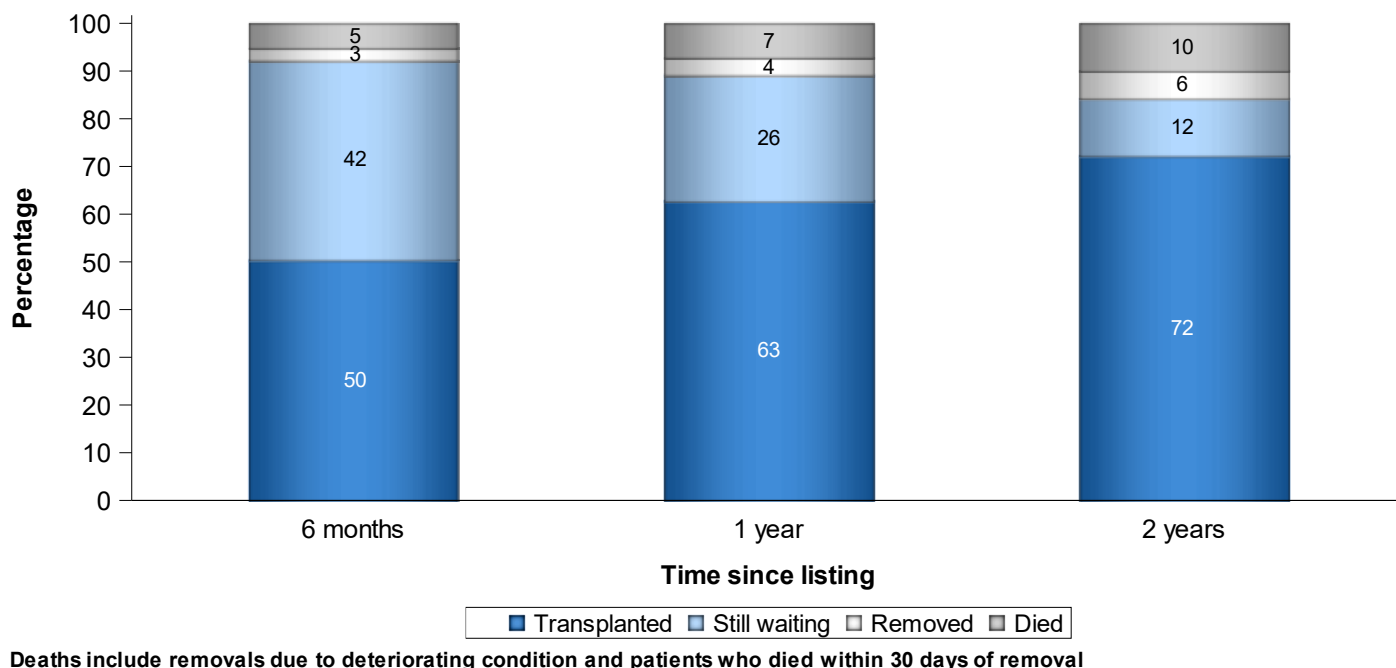


Table 8.4 and **Table 8.5** show the median waiting time to liver transplant for adult and paediatric elective registrations, separately, including a breakdown by blood group and ethnicity for adult elective registrations only. On average, adult patients wait 130 days for a transplant while paediatric patients wait an average of 254 days. Note that these waiting times are not adjusted for other relevant factors which may be influential and differ across blood or ethnic groups.

Table 8.4 Median waiting time to liver transplant in the UK, for patients registered 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2025			
Blood group	Number of patients registered	Waiting time (days)	
		Median	95% Confidence interval
Adult			
O	841	177	147 - 207
A	687	114	97 - 131
B	213	140	99 - 181
AB	74	46	30 - 62
TOTAL	1815	130	115 - 145
Paediatric	146	254	160 - 348

Table 8.5 Median waiting time to liver transplant in the UK, for patients registered 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2025

Ethnicity	Number of patients registered	Waiting time (days)	
		Median	95% Confidence interval
Adult			
White	1573	126	110 - 142
Asian	141	145	95 - 195
Black	53	84	13 - 155
Other	21	136	38 - 234
TOTAL¹	1815	130	115 - 145
Paediatric	146	254	160 - 348

¹ Includes 27 patients whose ethnicity was not reported

8.3 Donor and organ supply

Of the 1,428 actual organ donors, 1,127 (79%) donated their liver and 868 (77%) of these donated livers were used; see **Table 8.6**. Of livers retrieved from donors after brain death and donors after circulatory death, 85% and 68% were transplanted, respectively. Segments from one liver can be used in more than one transplant, see **Table 8.9**.

Table 8.6 Deceased liver donation and retrieval in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by allocation zone

Allocation zone	Number of donors						Number of livers retrieved (used)					
	Solid organ			Liver			DBD			DCD		
	DBD	DCD	TOTAL	DBD	DCD	TOTAL	DBD			DCD		TOTAL
Birmingham	120	158	278	109	105	214	109	(99)		105	(73)	214 (172)
Cambridge	75	106	181	71	75	146	71	(57)		75	(53)	146 (110)
Edinburgh	65	103	168	63	72	135	63	(55)		72	(49)	135 (104)
King's College	146	186	332	132	126	258	132	(108)		126	(85)	258 (193)
Leeds	122	131	253	109	88	197	109	(91)		88	(62)	197 (153)
Newcastle	35	36	71	30	28	58	30	(28)		28	(15)	58 (43)
Royal Free	73	72	145	68	51	119	68	(57)		51	(36)	119 (93)
TOTAL	636	792	1428	582	545	1127	582	(495)		545	(373)	1127 (868)

The rates per million population (pmp) for liver donors are shown in **Table 8.7** by donor country/NHS region of residence. No adjustments have been made for potential demographic differences in populations. The overall deceased liver donor rate was 16.2 pmp in 2025-2026 and ranged from 10.9 pmp to 22.3 pmp across English NHS regions.

Table 8.7 Liver donation rates for deceased donors in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by Country/ NHS region						
Country/ NHS region of residence	DBD		Liver donors (pmp) DCD		TOTAL	
North East and Yorkshire	71	(8.4)	78	(9.2)	149	(17.6)
North West	47	(6.1)	38	(4.9)	85	(11.0)
Midlands	89	(7.9)	72	(6.4)	161	(14.3)
East of England	67	(10.2)	80	(12.2)	147	(22.3)
London	61	(6.7)	38	(4.2)	99	(10.9)
South East	65	(6.7)	78	(8.1)	143	(14.8)
South West	55	(9.3)	58	(9.8)	113	(19.1)
England	455	(7.7)	442	(7.5)	897	(15.3)
Isle of Man	1	(12.5)	2	(25.0)	3	(37.5)
Channel Islands	3	(17.6)	0	(0.0)	3	(17.6)
Wales	32	(9.9)	23	(7.1)	55	(17.1)
Scotland	28	(5.0)	42	(7.5)	70	(12.5)
Northern Ireland	26	(13.3)	16	(8.2)	42	(21.4)
TOAL¹	582	(8.4)	545	(7.8)	1127	(16.2)

¹ Includes 57 donors with unknown UK postcode (37 DBD and 20 DCD)

8.4 Transplants

The number of liver transplants by recipient country/NHS region of residence are shown in **Table 8.8**. No adjustments have been made for potential demographic differences in populations. The deceased donor transplant rate ranged from 10.5 to 14.2 pmp across English NHS regions and overall was 13.0 pmp.

Table 8.8 Liver transplant rates per million population (pmp), in the UK, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, by country and English NHS region								
Country/ NHS region of residence	DBD		DCD		TOTAL		Living	
	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)	N	(pmp)
North East and Yorkshire	58	(6.9)	31	(3.7)	89	(10.5)	4	(0.5)
North West	70	(9.1)	26	(3.4)	96	(12.4)	2	(0.3)
Midlands	65	(5.8)	60	(5.3)	125	(11.1)	2	(0.2)
East of England	45	(6.8)	42	(6.4)	87	(13.2)	1	(0.2)
London	80	(8.8)	49	(5.4)	129	(14.1)	6	(0.7)
South East	76	(7.9)	59	(6.1)	135	(14.0)	2	(0.2)
South West	46	(7.8)	38	(6.4)	84	(14.2)	0	(0.0)
England	440	(7.5)	305	(5.2)	745	(12.7)	17	(0.3)
Isle of Man	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
Channel Islands	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
Wales	27	(8.4)	14	(4.3)	41	(12.7)	0	(0.0)
Scotland	44	(7.9)	36	(6.4)	80	(14.3)	2	(0.4)
Northern Ireland	22	(11.2)	16	(8.2)	38	(19.4)	0	(0.0)
TOTAL^{1,2}	534	(7.7)	371	(5.3)	905	(13.0)	19	(0.3)

¹ Excludes 20 recipients who reside outside of the UK (3 DBD, 3 DCD and 14 Living)

² Includes 1 DBD recipient with an unknown UK postcode

The number of whole, reduced and split liver transplants by urgency status of the transplant (elective, super-urgent) in 2025-2026 is shown in **Table 8.9**. The term 'reduced' is used when only one lobe of the liver is transplanted and the term 'split' applies when both lobes of the liver are transplanted into two different recipients.

Overall, the number of deceased donor liver transplants increased by 4% in 2025-2026. There were 911 deceased donor liver transplants performed in 2025-2026: 902 liver only transplants (821 whole liver, 65 split liver and 16 reduced liver lobes), 8 simultaneous liver and kidney and 1 simultaneous heart and liver. Split liver transplants accounted for 80% of liver lobe only transplant activity.

Table 8.9 Deceased liver transplants performed in the UK, 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2026

Transplant centre	2024-2025								2025-2026							
	Whole liver		Reduced liver		Split liver		TOTAL		Whole liver		Reduced liver		Split liver		TOTAL	
	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU	E	SU
Birmingham	162	15	5	1	18	4	185	20	151	12	2	0	16	0	169	12
Cambridge	96	10	0	0	6	0	102	10	97	12	0	0	4	0	101	12
Edinburgh	60	6	0	0	0	0	60	6	69	10	0	0	0	0	69	10
King's College	139	16	9	5	21	4	169	25	218	15	5	1	30	0	253	16
Leeds	97	9	3	0	9	1	109	10	89	10	6	2	12	1	107	13
Newcastle	42	8	0	0	0	0	42	8	28	2	0	0	0	0	28	2
Royal Free	114	11	0	0	3	0	117	11	103	13	0	0	3	0	106	13
TOTAL	710	75	17	6	57	9	784	90	755	74	13	3	65	1	833	78

E=Elective, SU=Super-urgent

Birmingham, King's College and Leeds transplant paediatric patients

The length of time that elapses between a liver being removed from the donor to its transplantation into the recipient is called the total preservation time. Generally, the shorter this time, the more likely the liver is to work immediately and the better the long-term outcome. In 2025-2026, the median total preservation time for a DBD donor whole liver only transplant was 8.5 hours (Inter-Quartile (IQ) range 6.9 – 10.3) and for a DCD donor whole liver only transplant was 6.7 hours (IQ range 5.2 – 8.6) and overall was 7.8 hours (IQ range 6.0 – 9.6). Please note some of the reported total preservation times may include the use of donor organ maintenance systems.

At 31 March 2026 there were approximately 12,800 recipients with a functioning liver transplant (or multi-organ including the liver) being followed-up as reported to the UK Transplant Registry.

8.5 Demographic characteristics

The age group, sex, ethnicity and blood group of liver donors, transplant recipients and transplant list patients are shown in **Table 8.10** along with the liver graft number for transplant recipients and patients active on the transplant list.

Table 8.10 Demographic characteristics of deceased liver donors and transplant recipients, 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, and transplant list patients at 31 March							
		Donors		Transplant recipients		Active transplant list patients	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Age	0-17	23	(2)	70	(8)	68	(11)
	18-34	135	(12)	92	(10)	95	(16)
	35-49	276	(24)	198	(22)	166	(27)
	50-59	230	(20)	243	(27)	156	(26)
	60-69	282	(25)	287	(32)	123	(20)
	70+	181	(16)	21	(2)	2	(0)
	Mean (SD)	53	(16)	49	(18)	44	(18)
Sex	Male	651	(58)	541	(59)	331	(54)
	Female	476	(42)	370	(41)	279	(46)
Ethnicity	White	998	(92)	752	(85)	505	(84)
	Asian	45	(4)	79	(9)	64	(11)
	Black	20	(2)	46	(5)	22	(4)
	Other	20	(2)	12	(1)	8	(1)
	Unknown	44	-	22	-	11	-
Blood group	O	507	(45)	375	(41)	368	(60)
	A	484	(43)	380	(42)	156	(26)
	B	110	(10)	113	(12)	79	(13)
	AB	24	(2)	43	(5)	7	(1)
	Unknown	2	-	-	-	-	-
Graft number	First graft		-	815	(89)	543	(89)
	Re-graft		-	96	(11)	67	(11)
TOTAL		1127	(100)	911	(100)	610	(100)