

NHSBT Board Meeting

January 2018

Gold Heart Pins for Donor Families

1. Status: Public

2. Executive Summary

This paper seeks to inform the NHSBT Board of the planned implementation of the Organ Donation Gold Heart Family Pin. At present there is no mechanism through which NHSBT as the organ donation organisation for the UK recognises the vital contribution donor families make to saving and improving the lives of their fellow citizens by supporting their loved ones' donation. To this end the 'Gold Heart' pin has been developed, the pin will be offered to the immediate family of donors facilitated by NHSBT. The pin would be a symbolic recognition of the altruism of the family and could, through the positive identification of donor families, help to promote organ donation in their community.

3. Action Requested

- That the Board note and support the rationale for the development of the Gold Heart Organ Donor Family Pin.
- That the Board note the progress made thus far to design and plan for implementation of the Gold Heart Donor Family Pin. The process is planned to launch in January 2018 with the potential for a public launch to follow.

4. Purpose of the Paper

Organ Donation cannot take place without the support of those closest to the potential organ donor, usually the family. Their support for the donation process is an act of altruism which takes place without reward or recognition save for the comfort they take from the thought that their loved one's last act was to save the lives of others. NHSBT and the Order of St John have sought to recognise the gift of the organ donor through the posthumous Order of St John Organ Donor Award. This is awarded to the deceased donor and the family are simply the recipients on their behalf, consequently there is only one award, and importantly the families are aware that it is recognition of their loved ones' altruism and not theirs. Given the personal and societal benefits of Organ Donation an act of recognition and thanks to the families of organ donors would seem fitting and would fit with the TOT2020 Strategy ambition that:

'Donation should be seen as a responsibility and a feature of good citizenship, regardless of background or community. Donation should be something of which people are proud'

5. Background

- 5.1 Organ Donation offers personal and societal benefits and the TOT2020 Strategy recognises that support across UK society for donation is vital if the goal of 80% consent rate is to be achieved. Lorraine Fahey, Business Support to the Assistant Director, Organ Donation and Nursing put forward the idea of the Gold Pin as a way of recognising the importance of Organ Donor Families. The benevolence of organ donors has been increasingly recognised with positive messaging around organ donation stories in Organ Donation Week and through more personal recognition such as the Order of St John Award. In this context it was felt appropriate to recognise the contribution of organ donor families, without whose support donation would not take place. Both deceased and living organ donors are recognised by the award of separate pins but there was no equivalent for families. The Gold Heart pin for the immediate family of deceased organ donors will address that disparity and thank them for their unique role in saving lives.
- 5.2 The current organ donation behaviour change strategy utilises a pink 'Yes I donate' heart which is used in publicity materials and which already exists as a pin which can be worn to show support for organ donation. The Gold Heart Organ Donor Family Pin retains the stylised shape of the pink heart but is slightly larger as befits the importance of the family. This will allow for synergies between the Pink and Gold pins to be exploited with donation supporters wearing Pink Hearts while the Gold Heart would signal that the donor family are different in a positive way. In the USA the Gold Star pin is awarded to those whose loved ones have died in service of their country. The Gold Star families are honoured and the pin is an instantly recognisable symbol of their loss. The ambition for the Organ Donation Gold Heart pin would be for it to become a part of the iconography of organ donation in the UK. The ambition is that over time the Pin will become recognisable by the public and seen as a symbol of the generosity of the family member, and as such is something the family member is proud to wear.
- 5.3 As well as providing a recognition of the family members benevolence it is anticipated that as with the pink 'Yes' pins the Gold Pins are likely to be conversation points when worn. This prompt to share the donor families story would also be a positive way to promote organ donation. The pin will take organ donation into the communities in which the donor family lives and will thereby assist the wider goal of seeking to normalise organ donation in the UK. The Heart could also be beneficial in circumstances where families are in dispute over who should collect the posthumous Order of St John Award for Organ Donation. By providing a pin for each family member it will allow each person to wear something designed to acknowledge the donation. The Gold Heart is recognising the family and not the deceased donor so is entirely different to the Award of the Order of St John but as part of the holistic care of the family could help to ease tensions around who receives the Award.

5.4 As the pin is intended as recognition for Organ Donor families it has been agreed that there should be no restriction upon families who supported a donation before the introductory date of the Pin receiving them. Therefore where previous donor families request the pin their request will be facilitated, however pins will not be routinely offered to families with whom there is no ongoing contact.

6. Proposal Development

6.1A prototype Pin was designed and approved by the ODT SMT and then shared at the ODT Sustainable Funding Meeting. As a consequence of feedback from the Health Departments of Scotland and Northern Ireland a Gold Heart Pin minus the 'Yes' inscription has been designed and will be provided to donor families from those two nations, this is to ensure there is no potential for the messaging to be misinterpreted in those nations. Following those changes all consulted parties gave their approval for the introduction of the Pin. The Order of St John Lead contact with NHSBT has also been consulted and approved of the innovation believing it to be a positive addition to the service offered to donor families.

6.2 The costs for 10,000 Pins with and without the 'Yes' so sufficient for around 18 months of usage across the UK totalled £6845 + VAT. The cost to be met from within the Organ Donation and Nursing budget. The pins will be offered to the donor family by the SN-OD who takes consent, at that time they would note the numbers of pins required for the family and where the pins should be posted. It would be expected that Gold Hearts will be limited to immediate family namely: Father/Mother/Son/Daughter/Husband/Wife/Partner however this will be flexible so where possible family requests can be met and the different scenarios of family life supported.

6.3 The pins will be retained at the Organ Donation Donor Records Department (DRD) in Speke. The DRD will receive information from the SN-OD regarding number of pins required and the posting address together with the rest of the donor information. A certificate will accompany the pins which will be of a suitable quality to allow framing/keeping should the family so desire. These should reach the family in time for the funeral and if numbers of pink pins allow it could be possible to send some in the pack so other mourners can show their support. The DRD team are confident this change in process can be undertaken by them with no impact upon their ability to carry out the rest of their portfolio of work.

6.4 The English and Welsh Gold Hearts have been delivered to Speke with the Scottish and Northern Irish Gold Hearts expected to be delivered before Christmas, along with the bespoke embossed certificates. Given this is the introduction of a new process for the DRD and the importance of a smooth and orderly introduction it has been agreed that Gold Hearts will start to be offered in January 2018.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the Board note the creation of the Gold Heart Donor Family Pin as outlined in this paper.

7.2 That the Board note the provisional commencement date for the Pin of January 2018.

Author:

Lorraine Fahey
Business Support – Organ Donation and Nursing

Responsible Director

Sally Johnson
Director - ODT