
FOREWORD

I am pleased to present you with the Transplant Activity report for 2010/11 which reveals another year-on-year increase in the number of deceased donors – to 1,010 – the largest number in one year in the UK.

Without our donors, the 3,740 life-saving transplants that took place – another record high and the sixth rise in succession – would not have been possible. They made a tremendous decision when they donated their organs, and in many cases tissue as well, to save the lives of others through transplantation. We are forever grateful to them and to their families for supporting their decision.

Before the implementation of the Organ Donation Taskforce recommendations, the number of deceased organ donations in the UK was in steady decline. The number of donors after brain death (DBD) has however increased over the last four years by 5%, reversing the trend which saw a 13% drop between 2001/02 and 2007/08.

Efforts to increase donation after circulatory death (DCD) have been successful with an 87% increase since 2007/08. Last year 11% more DCD donors were identified and this process continues to be vital in helping to address the need for kidney transplants in particular.

Overall, the deceased organ donation rate across the UK now stands at 16.3 per million population.

Last year saw a slight drop in the number of living organ donors to 1,045, representing a 2% decrease on the previous 12 months. 'Directed' living donations to relatives or friends dropped by 3% while the number of 'undirected' living donor transplants (also known as altruistic donor transplants) and paired and pooled donations contributed more than 60 kidney transplants between them. Living donation still contributes more than a third – 38% - of the total kidney transplant programme and remains an integral part of our strategy to save more lives.

I'm delighted to report that cornea donation and transplantation reached new heights last year. More than 5,500 corneas were donated, an 11% increase on the previous year, partly made possible through new arrangements with Moorfields Eye Hospital who now report data to the UK Transplant Registry. From the 5,091 donated corneas that were supplied to the Corneal Transplant Service (CTS) eye banks, 3,566 were transplanted – a 15% increase compared to the previous year.

Last year marked a major turning point for the Organ Donor Register (ODR) with the discovery that an inherent technical fault had led to incorrect data recording. Quite rightly this sparked an amount of public scrutiny and we are continuing to see through the recommendations made following an independent review.

In spite of this, public endorsement led to almost 675,000 more registrations last year, rising to 17,751,795 by the end of the year, a 4% increase on the year before. Alongside this overall increase, the proportion of actual organ donors and cornea

only donors who had joined the ODR before their death rose to 33% and 39% respectively. These increases demonstrate ongoing public support and recognition of the value of donation and transplantation, and this is also reflected in the high proportion of members who have indicated their willingness to allow all their organs and tissue to be donated, which last year rose to 89%.

Looking forward, working with our partners across the NHS and beyond, we will continue to strive to make more organs available for transplantation.

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