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## 4 NATIONAL ORGAN RETRIEVAL SERVICE

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### 4.1 Introduction

A National Organ Retrieval Service (NORS) was introduced in the UK on 1 April 2010. The service comprises seven abdominal organ retrieval teams and six cardiothoracic organ retrieval teams. These teams are based in liver and cardiothoracic transplant centres, respectively.

Each of the thirteen teams is on call 24 hours per day, seven days per week. If a team is the first on-call for a particular donor hospital, they are required to attend within an agreed timescale if at least one organ has been accepted for transplant when offered to the transplant centres in the UK. Each team has a designated area for which they are first on-call, based on the premise that the travel time to any hospital in their area should be less than three hours. There are some exceptions to this principle for remote hospitals. If a team is already retrieving when they are called to attend a donor, then a second team will be called in to retrieve, and so on.

The number of donors after brain death and donors after circulatory death that were attended by each of the teams is shown in **Table 4.1**. The table also shows the number of proceeding (actual) organ donors and the number that did not proceed to donation. Many of the potential donors after circulatory death prove unsuitable for organ donation due to a prolonged time to death in which time the organs deteriorate. The number of donors attended per team varies according to the number of potential donors identified in each of the areas, as the areas are not of equal size.

A small number of donors are attended by local kidney transplant teams. This is typically for donors after circulatory death when only the donor's kidneys have been accepted for transplant. There is no expectation that local kidney teams retrieve organs, but they are appropriately reimbursed if they are willing and able to do so.

**Table 4.1 Number of actual and non-proceeding donors per retrieval team**

Retrieval team	Donors after brain death				Donors after circulatory death			
	Actual	Non-proceeding	% non-proc	No. attended	Actual	Non-proceeding	% non-proc	No. attended
<b>Abdominal</b>								
Birmingham / Cardiff	120	0	0	120	88	54	38	142
Cambridge	61	1	2	62	55	32	37	87
King's	128	3	2	131	65	64	50	129
Leeds / Manchester	106	4	4	110	67	57	46	124
Newcastle	68	2	3	70	32	23	42	55
Royal Free / Oxford	102	5	5	107	39	32	45	71
Scotland	51	1	2	52	17	8	32	25
<b>Abdominal total</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>633</b>
<b>Cardiothoracic</b>								
Birmingham	41	19	32	60	0	1	100	1
Harefield	44	32	42	76	11	23	68	34
Manchester	31	27	47	58	2	1	33	3
Newcastle	41	11	21	52	9	9	50	18
Papworth	40	26	39	66	4	11	73	15
Scotland	22	14	39	36	0	12	100	12
<b>Cardiothoracic total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Total donors (abdominal and/or cardiothoracic)</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>-</b>

Note: there were 18 actual donors attended by a local team. Of the local abdominal donors, Plymouth attended four, Nottingham and Liverpool attended two, and Sheffield and Bristol each attended one. Of the cardiothoracic donors, six were attended by Great Ormond Street Hospital and two were attended by an overseas retrieval team.