

12 year old transplant recipient climbs Snowdon to mark 10 years after surgery

Before setting off on her journey with family, friends and supporters, Ella said:

She wanted to mark this important milestone in her life by climbing the highest peak in Wales and England to raise awareness of the importance of organ donation, and to encourage everyone to think about and share their decision on giving the gift of life.

After suffering from liver disease as a baby, Ella Noon received her life saving liver transplant when she was only 26 months old. Ella was very lucky as she was on the waiting list less than a week when an organ became available.

“I have always wanted to do something challenging to show the world that having a transplant doesn’t stop you from doing exciting and challenging things. I thought it was important to mark 10 years since my transplant because without it, I wouldn’t have survived. The liver I received gave me another chance at life so I’m determined to live it in honour of my donor.”

Joining her on the trek, Ella’s mother Andrea Noon said:

“When Ella fell seriously ill as a baby, we were told that she needed an urgent liver transplant. We were so lucky a liver was found in time; sadly, not all families are so lucky. I think it’s so important for families and loved ones to discuss their organ donation decision, especially now as the law has changed in Wales, deciding to donate has such a huge impact on someone’s life.”

Following a social media campaign, Ella found her donor’s mother, who is also amongst the climbers. Lindsey Adderson said;

“Today is about celebrating Ella’s life, and remembering my daughter Jessica, whose tragic passing saved her life.”

Jessica died when she was 17 years old, and had discussed her organ donation wishes with her mother a few weeks previously. Lindsay added:

“That conversation came back to me when the subject of organ

donation came up. It was an easy decision for me to make, however other members of the family weren't so sure. I'm proud I was able to stick to my guns and help fulfil Jessica's wishes to become an organ donor.

"Just by asking 'would you donate your organs?' can start a really important discussion that could help save a life, like Jessica saved Ella's."

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

"Ella is a truly remarkable girl, determined to make the most of her life after her transplant and highlights the importance of organ donation. I also want to commend all donors and their families, without their generosity and support people like Ella will not get the transplant they so desperately need.

"We want to encourage everyone across Wales to talk with their loved ones about their organ donation decision. We know awareness and understanding is increasing, but it is really important we reach as many people in Wales as possible.

"We have seen huge improvements in our consent rates, in March 2013 they were just 50% but in March 2018 they increased to 70%, however while there are people dying waiting for their transplant we must work harder to further increase the consent rate to have a significant impact on reducing transplant waiting lists.

"Your family will be involved in any discussions about organ donation if, when you die, you are in a position to donate your organs. This could make an already difficult time more stressful if families have never discussed organ donation.

"I encourage everyone across Wales to talk to their loved ones about their organ donation decision to ensure they will honour it."

Simply having a chat can help benefit the people of Wales and the UK by reducing the number of people dying whilst waiting for a suitable organ to become available, and transforming the lives of others.

You can register a decision at any time by calling 0300 123 23 23 (Calls to this phone line will be answered by NHS Blood and Transplant) or visiting www.organdonationwales.org or by telling your family (and friends).