

Families in Wales encouraged to “have the chat” about organ donation wishes

In 2016-17 data published by NHS Blood and Transplant showed there were 21 cases where families either overrode their relatives' decisions to donate organs, or didn't support the deemed consent.

With an average of 3.3 organs retrieved per donor in the UK in 2016-17, this could have resulted in as many as 69 additional transplants.

On 1 December 2015, Wales was the first country in the UK to move to a soft opt-out, system of consent to organ donation. This means that unless a person has not registered a decision to become an organ donor (opted in) or a decision not to become an organ donor (opted out), they will be considered as having no objection to being an organ donor – this is known as deemed consent.

As a result of the change an increase in donations is expected over a period of time. Over the last year, there has been a decrease of 18.5% in patients who died whilst on the waiting list for their transplant.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“While there are people dying waiting for their transplant we must work harder to increase the consent rate to have a significant impact on reducing transplant waiting lists.

“I want to encourage everyone across Wales to talk to their loved ones about their organ donation decision. While we know awareness and understanding is increasing, it's really important the Welsh public share their decision with their family.

“Simply having a chat about your decision with family and friends ensures they can honour your wishes, when you die.”

One conversation 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 or visiting www.organdonationwales.org or by telling your family (and friends).