

Major campaign urges people to talk about organ donation

Three hard-hitting advertisements show an individual's choice to donate their organs being over-ridden by family members, because they didn't talk to them about their decision or registration on the organ donor register to become a donor.

The Welsh Government is urging people to talk during Organ Donation Week (September 3 to 9) to prevent lifesaving transplants being missed because families did not know their loved one's organ donation decision.

Surveys show around 80% of people in the UK support organ donation, however only 33% of people have told their family that they want to donate. In circumstances where a family does not know their loved one's decision, they are far more likely to refuse to allow organ donation to take place.

Data published by NHS Blood and Transplant showed that in 2017-18 there were 22 cases in Wales where families either overrode their relatives' decisions to donate organs, or didn't support deemed consent. With an average of 3.2 organs retrieved per donor in Wales in 2017-18, this could have resulted in as many as 70 additional transplants.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

"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 the Welsh public on this issue.

"We have seen huge improvements in our consent rates, increasing from 59% in 2015-16 to 70% in 2017-18, however when there are still people dying waiting for a transplant we must work harder to further increase the consent rate to have a significant impact on reducing transplant waiting lists.

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

"If you support organ donation, remember to speak to your family and friends about it."

Just 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.

It is your decision whether or not you would like to donate your organs after you die.

Once your decision is made, you can choose to:

- Opt in – this is your decision to become a donor.
- Do nothing – You will be treated as having no objection to being a donor and your consent will be deemed.
- Opt out – this is your decision not to become a donor.
- 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 organdonationwales.org or by telling your family (and friends).

[Dry Weather summit update](#)

Last week at the Royal Welsh Show, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths chaired a 'Dry Weather Summit' with key agricultural partners to discuss the dry period and its impact on farmers.

The Summit was an opportunity to identify what the Government and industry can do collectively to mitigate some of the issues arising from the current weather conditions.

With only 19mm of rainfall in Wales during June, the availability of water and grazing for livestock and the subsequent impact on crop growth has been unprecedented.

During the Summit, the Cabinet Secretary made a commitment to explore what measures the Government could introduce to support the industry, in the immediate, medium and longer term.

A technical note for farmers on the support available in the short term is available on the [Welsh Government website](#).

[Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales re-appoint existing members to the Commission](#)

Alun Davies said:

“I am pleased to announce the re-appointment of Theodore Joloza and Julie May.

“These re-appointments will ensure there are the necessary skills and expertise in the Commission as it continues to keep under review all local government areas in Wales, and the electoral arrangements of principal councils, and to make proposals to Welsh Government, which are considered desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

“Mr Joloza and Mrs May will continue to bring valuable experience to the roles.”

The re-appointments have been made in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments and will commence on 1st September 2018 for a three year term.

As members Mr Joloza and Mrs May are paid a daily fee of £198 with a time commitment of 2-3 days per month.

Finance Secretary announces extra £17m EU funds to help young people in South East Wales unlock their career potential

Inspire2Achieve, led by Blaenau Gwent and Newport Councils, will receive an extra £15.9m of EU funding to work with schools and colleges to provide support to young people aged 11-19 years who are at risk of falling out of education and training.

Newport Council’s Inspire2Work will receive a further £1.46m of EU funding to provide one-to-one mentoring, help with basic and personal skills and digital literacy, so young people aged 16-24 years can gain qualifications, enter further education and secure employment.

The new investment builds on the £19m of EU funding previously awarded to the schemes, which have already supported over 4,000 young people. Together with the additional funding, the schemes will support 15,000 more individuals over the next four years.

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Mark Drakeford said:

“It is essential we support our young people to achieve a brighter

and more prosperous future. The additional EU funding will help young people address barriers to their education and give them the targeted support they need to access employment. It will build on the successful achievements of EU funds so far, which have already helped almost 40,000 young people across Wales to improve their chances of employment success.”

Councillor Dai Davies, Executive Member for Regeneration at Blaenau Gwent Council added:

“We fully welcome this additional EU funding for the Inspire2Achieve project which will support more young people across the South East Wales region to fully achieve their potential. “We have been privileged to work in partnership with Newport on this important project which supports young people in the area who feel disengaged from mainstream education and face barriers to learning. We look forward to continuing this very important work so all of our young people, regardless of circumstance, are given the opportunity to gain employment and lead economically active lives.”

Councillor Gail Giles, Newport City Council’s Cabinet Member for education and skills, said:

“As a council, we have already made significant progress in reducing the numbers of year 11 young people who are not in education, employment or training, from 4.7 per cent in 2014 to 1.3 per cent in 2017. This extra funding will mean we can help even more young people who are at risk of missing vital educational or training opportunities achieve their potential.”

[GCSE pupils congratulated by Kirsty Williams](#)

In the second year of reform of GCSEs in Wales, results also show an increase of 50% in the number of entries for Science – ensuring that a far greater number of young people have the higher level skills needed to drive Wales’ future economy. This reflects a change in entry patterns in schools and a move away from significant entries for vocational science qualifications.

Individual sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) entries are up by over 10% and the number of pupils gaining A* in these sciences has also risen. A*-C outcomes remain stable with 9 in 10 achieving these results.

Visiting West Monmouth School in Pontypool, Kirsty Williams said:

“I want to congratulate pupils who are receiving their results today and to thank the teachers who worked so tirelessly to deliver these new qualifications.

“Today marks a culture change for Science in Wales. Entries are up by 50%, with more pupils gaining A*-C and more achieving the very top grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This shows the importance that both we and schools attach to this subject and I am confident that together we will continue to go from strength to strength, as we saw with last week’s A Level results.”

Last year the Education Secretary announced measures to discourage schools from entering thousands of pupils too early unless they were ready. This is borne out by this year’s results showing an overall decrease in the number of students entered before they have completed their full programme of study – otherwise known as early entry.

These pupils were entered early either last summer or in November and did not return to sit the exam again this summer. However, while numbers have fallen, early entry has still had a significant impact on some subjects.

Different and early entry patterns have had an effect on subjects such as English. As made clear by JCQ, the most accurate picture of attainment is 16 year olds irrespective of when they sat the exam, whether that’s last summer, November or this summer. This shows an English Language A*-C rate of 63.3%.

“Today’s results are, of course, only one part of a picture that will be pieced together in the autumn”, the Education Secretary continued.

“Early entry has had an impact on some of these results and that’s why the final picture will change. You only have to look at previous years where the autumn results have been several percentage points higher than the data published in the summer.”