

Wales leading on organ donation consent rates

The latest Organ Donation and Transplantation statistics reveal a 72% consent rate and approximately 24.3 donors per million population (pmp), putting Wales at the top of the list.

Statistics also show that 39% of the Welsh population have registered to opt-in to donate their organs following their death.

For the first three quarters during 2017-18, there were 55 deceased organ donors, 16 more donors than the same period the previous year.

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 if 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. However, if individuals don't tell their family of their decision to donate, the family may not honour that decision and over-ride the organ donor registration or not support deemed consent.

The figures also demonstrate a decrease in the number of transplants compared to the corresponding timeframe for 2016/17; this was mainly due to fewer living transplants taking place. However, fewer people died whilst on the transplant waiting list at the end of the third quarter of 2017/18 in comparison to the previous year.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said;

These latest figures show promise, and I'm proud that Wales is leading the way in giving the gift of life to others.

There are significant steps being made, however small they are, and it is important to remember that this is a marathon, not a sprint.

However, while there are people dying waiting for their transplant, we must work harder to further increase the consent rate in order to have a significant impact on reducing transplant waiting lists.

Our latest campaign highlighted the importance of having a chat with your families and loved ones about organ donation, and I'd like to reiterate that message by encouraging 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).