



Organ Transplantation – Increase in Number of Organ Donations will not meet Organ Donation Taskforce Target

The Kidney Alliance believes that it is vital to increase the rates of organ transplantation in the UK. The Kidney Alliance acknowledges the progress that has been made in increasing the number of transplants over the past 4 years but is **disappointed that the government's target of increasing the number of organ donations by 50% by 2013 will not be met.** We seek assurance that national accountability for the quality and quantity of actual transplants remains a priority and will continue to be so beyond 2013.

The number of patients waiting for transplants is still growing, and continues to substantially exceed the number of organs available for transplantation. We are concerned that the winding up of the Organ Donation Taskforce and the absence of a National Director for Transplantation will result in loss of focus on organ donation as a key national priority. This is an issue where focus must not be lost.

In the current financial climate investment in increasing transplant rates is likely to reduce costs. The cost benefit of kidney transplantation compared to dialysis over a period of ten years (the median transplant survival time) is £241,000 or £24,100 per year for each year that the patient has a functioning transplanted kidney.¹

Transplantation often enables return to the workforce, relieving the burden on the benefits system, and all will enjoy a vast improvement in quality of life. Ongoing support is required for the complex chain of events leading to a potential organ donor providing organs suitable for transplantation. This includes raising public awareness of organ donation with the aims of increased registration on the organ donor register and reduced rates of refusal to allow donation by potential donors' families. Infrastructural and financial resources need to be adequate to support the process of organ donation and we support ongoing implementation of the Organ Donation Taskforce recommendations on this issue.

The Kidney Alliance recognises that there are a wide range of views on the introduction of an opt-out system of consent for organ donation in the UK and the difficulty in reaching a consensus of any kind on the matter. We look forward to the data from Wales should an opt-out system be adopted there.

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http://www.uktransplant.org.uk/ukt/newsroom/fact_sheets/cost_effectiveness_of_transplantation.jsp



The Kidney Alliance believes that the fundamental requirements in increasing organ donation remain:

- Raise public awareness of the benefits of organ transplantation
- Make decisions on giving permission by families easier, better informed and less stressful whatever their decision
- Encourage and make it easier for those who decide they want to donate to provide recognised consent
- Provide regular opportunities to review decisions and capability to change mind at any time.
- Organ donation from individuals dying in appropriate circumstances should be regarded as the norm by healthcare professionals and society.
- Provide adequate resources to support the process of organ donation and transplantation.

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Kidney Alliance members: British Kidney Patient Association, British Transplantation Society, British Renal Society, Kidney Research UK, National Kidney Federation, Renal Association, Renal Nutrition Group, Association of Renal Managers, Royal College of Nursing (Renal Forum), British Association of Paediatric Nephrologists

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