

NHSBT online survey: Organ Donation Strategy – Seeking your views

Closing date: 24 September 2012

These responses are based on conclusions and recommendations of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics report [Human bodies: donation for medicine and research](#), published in October 2011.

Question: How do we maximise use of every offered organ, and thereby maximise the gift of donation? Please briefly set out your thoughts.

The Council endorses the Organ Donation Taskforce's focus on addressing problems arising from unstructured and fragmented arrangements for deceased organ donation in the past, and note that systemic improvements have led to significant increases in the number of donated organs made available for transplantation in recent years. However, given the current organisational restructuring of central and local aspects of the NHS, and pressure on budgets, there is a risk that these systemic improvements could be lost. We recommend close monitoring of the possible impact of organisational and budgetary changes on organ donation services and protection of systems that have been shown to work well.

More use of donated organs for research purposes is likely to help maximise the use of every offered organ, given the possible use of organs that are not suitable for transplant and the possible use of organs that are not currently used for therapeutic purposes. We suggest that routine information about the Organ Donor Register should include explicit reference to the potential research uses of organs and tissues, and that potential donors should have the option of authorising such uses in advance. We also recommend a pilot scheme to trial including the donation of organs for use in research in the standard consent form when authorisation for the removal and use of organs is sought from the person's family.

Question: What should we do to increase the pool of appropriate potential donors? NHSBT could develop systems to identify potential donors from other clinical environments, and approach their families. Please briefly set out your thoughts.

We suggest the introduction of a scheme in which the NHS would meet the funeral expenses for those who sign up to the Organ Donor Register and subsequently die in circumstances where they could become organ donors.

Question: How do we make organ donation a normal part of UK culture? Please briefly set out your thoughts.

We believe that mandated choice and prompted choice systems are ethical options for seeking advance authorisation for deceased organ donation. But these systems must include an opportunity to express an objection to donation as well as an authorisation, in order to truly represent a commitment to the wishes of the deceased. We endorse the use of a pilot scheme to track the effectiveness of the

new 'prompted choice' system via the DVLA and urge that the scheme is accompanied by robust research.

Question: What changes do we need to make to infrastructure, workforce, IT etc? Please briefly set out your thoughts.

We endorse the Organ Donation Taskforce's recommendation that all clinical staff involved in caring for potential donors should have training in the principles of organ donation.

It is essential to put in place a robust information technology system that is better equipped for recording people's wishes in an accurate manner. It should not be the case that the public's willingness to donate is undermined by information technology systems that fail to account accurately for potential donor's preferences.

Question: Do you agree that a person who has signed up to the Organ Donor Register should be a priority recipient for an organ if they subsequently require a transplant? (Yes or No).

No.