

Proposed Organ and Tissue Donation (Scotland) Bill

The recent taskforce report shows that we are making good progress with organ donation in Scotland. However, there are still currently almost 650 people waiting for a donor organ. Many of these will die waiting, and others will die before they even reach the list. Patients waiting on the Scottish liver transplant list have a 20% chance of dying before receiving a transplant, and this percentage is higher for those waiting for a heart. The principle behind an opt-out system is that if people do not object to their organs being used after death, then they should be used to save lives.

I believe that this Bill would be a significant milestone for organ donation in Scotland. Organ transplants save and improve lives. People are dying unnecessarily due to a chronic shortage of organs. By making this important change, which is supported by a significant proportion of the Scottish population, we would be giving people who require a donation, the very best chance of life.

Repeated surveys show that the majority of the public say that they support organ donation. Up to 90% of people support organ donation but, for various reasons, less than half of Scotland's population is registered on the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR). The Organ Donation Taskforce found that 72% of those questioned support a shift to an opt-out system

I therefore support Anne McTaggart MSP's proposal to introduce a soft opt-out system in Scotland.

