



## Blood and Transplant

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Anne McTaggart MSP  
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Scottish Parliament  
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22 September 2014

Dear Ms McTaggart,

I am writing to provide you with information which I hope will assist you during the consultation period of your proposed organ and tissue donation (Scotland) bill.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is constituted as England and Wales Special Health Authority which undertakes certain functions in Scotland by way of a contract with the Scottish Government. NHSBT acts as the UK-wide organ donation organisation responsible for providing donated tissues and solid organs for transplants and running the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR). Our remit also includes the provision of a safe, sufficient and efficient supply of blood in England and North Wales.

NHSBT welcomes any change that creates opportunities for discussion on the importance of organ donation and encourages more people to donate their organs after death. Donation and transplantation activity is organised by NHSBT on a collaborative basis across the UK as it is in the best interests of patients to ensure that organs have the best match to recipients.

NHSBT will work within whatever legislative framework is introduced in any of the four health administrations in the United Kingdom. NHSBT implements the policies of relevant UK health administrations while ensuring that operational and clinical procedures are not compromised.

If Scotland does decide to implement a system of presumed consent for organ donation, from an operational and clinical risk perspective we would strongly encourage you to consider legalisation that is similar to that of the current legislation passed by the Welsh assembly. This will ensure that NHSBT is able to support the new system as the NHS Organ Donor Register needs to serve the whole of the UK. Running several different systems would present operational challenges and potential confusion for the general public.

NHSBT played a key role in increasing deceased donation rates across the UK by 50% from 2008 to last year, and we are confident that we can harness the energy and enthusiasm from this achievement to deliver the ambitious goals set out in the organ donation and transplantation strategy – 'Taking Organ Transplantation to 2020'.



The new strategy was launched in July 2013 with the backing of the four UK Health Ministers and sets an agenda for increasing organ donation and transplantation rates to world class standards over the next seven years. The main aims of the strategy are: to improve consent/authorisation rates to organ donation above 80%; bring the UK deceased donor rate up to 26 per million per population; transplant 5% more organs offered from consented/authorised donors; and increase the number of patients receiving a transplant to 74 per million of the population. You can read the strategy in more detail on our website or via the following link; <http://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/to2020/>

Unless people in the UK are prepared to donate their organs when and if they can, and families are proud to agree to donation when their relative's wish is unknown, these aims cannot be achieved. The UK needs a transformation in donor and family consent/authorisation to match the transformations already under way in the NHS organ donation and transplantation services. Which is why, following on from the 2020 strategy, NHSBT published the Behaviour Change Strategy - *A strategy for delivering a revolution in public behaviour in relation to organ donation*. This was published in April.

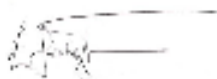
The strategy will provide a focus for activity to be carried out by a wide range of partners and stakeholders at a national and local level.

The Scottish Government has consistently run high profile organ donation campaigns year on year and will therefore be in a strong position to build on the excellent progress made to date.

We hope that any legislation introduced in Scotland would be consistent with the approach taken in the strategy to improve consent/authorisations rates by changing public attitudes and creating better support systems to enable more donations and transplant operations to happen.

I hope that you find this information useful to you during the consultation period of your legislation.

Yours sincerely



E Sally Johnson  
Director of Organ Donation and Transplantation