

**From:** s 22  
**Sent:** Thursday, 4 August 2016 6:13 PM  
**To:** DLO  
**Subject:** FW: Briefing request - Organ Donation [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Hi s 22

You asked for information regarding the Commonwealth's involvement in supporting and increasing organ donation in Australia, and what Australia could do to improve the rate at which people donate.

Commonwealth's involvement in supporting and increasing organ donation

The Commonwealth Government's national organ donation reform programme is led by the Organ and Tissue Authority (OTA), along with the DonatLife Network. The OTA was established in 2009 as a statutory agency in the Commonwealth Health portfolio. The OTA funds state and territory health departments to employ trained, clinical specialists dedicated to organ donation in public and private hospitals that make up the DonatLife Network. This includes staff dedicated to identify potential organ and tissue donors and then convert potential donors to actual donors.

Organ donation rates have been increasing steadily since 2009. In 2015, a record 1,241 lives were saved and transformed through the generosity of 435 deceased organ donors and their families. Compared to 2009, when the reform programme began, this represents:

- a 76 per cent increase in the number of deceased organ donors (435 donors in 2015, compared with 247 in 2009);
- a 55 per cent increase in the number of transplant recipients (1,241 recipients in 2015, compared with 799 in 2009); and

- a 55 per cent increase in the number of organ transplant procedures (1,303 transplants in 2015, compared with 843 in 2009).

In 2015, Australia achieved its highest ever number of consented donors (564), of whom 435 progressed to donation, which is 110 per cent higher than the 2009 total of 269. The national donation rate in 2015 was 18.3 donors per million population (dpmp), which exceeded the 2015 national target of 18.2 dpmp set by all Australian Government Health Ministers. The donation rate in 2015 of 18.3 dpmp represents a 61 per cent increase over 2009. Though there was a three per cent dip in donations in 2014, organ donation rates overall continue to improve. Changes in donation rates, and year-on-year variability, are similar to international experiences.

### *Funding*

Commonwealth funding to the OTA is \$245.4 million from 2014-15 to 2018-19, or approximately \$49 million per year.

Additional funding of \$10.2 million over two years was announced in the 2015-16 Budget to improve organ and tissue donation and transplantation rates. The additional funding will deliver clinical education to hospitals, develop a new Australian Organ Matching System and enhance the Australian Organ Donor Register to enable online registration of legal consent. In addition, the Supporting Leave for Living Organ Donors Programme will be continued to provide up to the minimum wage for up to nine weeks to employers of people who have taken leave to donate organs. These initiatives will be reviewed prior to the 2017-18 Budget, to assess the effectiveness of the new measures.

### *Current OTA activities*

The OTA reform programme includes working with state and territory governments, the DonateLife Network, clinical stakeholders and the community to expand the potential donor pool and support donation systems, including:

- delivering Family Donation Conversation workshops, supporting clinicians to enhance their communication skills and embed donation as part of routine end-of-life care;
- implementing the best practice model for offering organ and tissue donation in Australia, providing optimal care and support for families and clinicians when organ donation is possible;
- undertaking a Donor Family Study to inform improvements to support for families; and
- holding DonateLife Thank You Day on 20 November 2016, to publicly acknowledge organ and tissue donors and their families.

The Government is also currently implementing a number of recommendations from a 2015 review of the implementation of the national reform programme. Overall, the review found that the national reform programme had been effective in increasing organ donation rates. The review made 24 recommendations to inform the future direction of the OTA and lift organ donation rates, with the implementation of a number of recommendations already underway. Of the recommendations still to be implemented, reform to governance and addressing critical communications needs are being addressed as a first priority:

- a new governance board will replace the current Advisory Council and the role of the Chief Executive Officer will be revised; and
- public consultation on revising the DonateLife logo and on appropriate donor memorials for donor families.

The remaining recommendations will be implemented once governance arrangements are embedded.

Potential future actions

The Government is monitoring international trends and emerging evidence around effective and innovative approaches to increasing and improving organ and tissue donation.

Some stakeholders advocate for a move towards an opt-out system, whereby all citizens are automatically registered as donors unless they specifically choose to opt out. However, the informed consent model currently used in Australia is an ethical and transparent approach which balances the need for organ and tissue donors with the right of Australians to make an informed choice. Further, the evidence is mixed that an opt-out model contributes to achieving a higher donation rate. The main body of evidence, including international examples, indicates that critical to achieving sustained increase in organ donation is the implementation of a nationally consistent and coordinated approach to clinical practice reform to maximise identification of potential donors and consent to donation within the hospital system.

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Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Ph:s 22

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**From:** DLO

**Sent:** Wednesday, 3 August 2016 4:46 PM

**To:**s 22

**Cc:** s 22 PMO-DLO; Clarke, Louise

**Subject:** Briefing request - Organ Donation [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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PMO have asked if a very simple brief could get pulled together that steps out what the Government is doing to support organ donation in Australia (and flagging any issues on the horizon). This shouldn't be a brief with lots of attachments – just something simple that steps out the Commonwealth's involvement, what support the Government has given to organ donors/organ donation, and what (if anything) Australia could do to improve the rate with which people donate. I assume this means covering off the issue of an opt-in opt-out system, but I'll leave that to you to decide.

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