

ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION IN IRELAND

There are currently a number of transplant programmes in Ireland including kidneys, heart, heart/lung, liver and pancreas. The success rate of transplantation is high as is the number of patients with end stage disease requiring transplantation. As a result there is an ever-increasing need for organ donation to proceed.

WHO CAN BE AN ORGAN DONOR?

Organ donation can be considered when a patient on a ventilator is diagnosed as being brain stem dead. This may have resulted from a spontaneous brain haemorrhage or after a road traffic accident.

Whatever the reason it is important to remember that a person who is brain stem dead cannot recover. It is the ventilator and other machinery that keeps the blood circulating after death, keeping the organs perfused and suitable for transplantation.

CONSENT FOR ORGAN DONATION

As a family member or friend you may wish to discuss the option of organ donation. You may also be approached when appropriate by the medical or nursing staff in the Intensive Care Unit.

The staff are there to support you through this decision by providing you with the information you require.

Written consent for organ donation is obtained from the next of kin of every donor at the time of donation. Only organs that are specifically consented for are taken for transplantation.

THE ORGAN DONATION PROCESS

Once you have decided to proceed with organ donation preliminary enquiries are made to the transplant co-ordinator at the Organ Procurement Centre in Beaumont Hospital who co-ordinate the process of organ donation.

In order for transplantation to proceed safely the Department of Health and Children have recommended that you discuss the following issues and consider if they could apply to your loved one.

It may be appropriate for this discussion to include other key people such as extended family, friends, partners or other healthcare professionals.

While acknowledging that this is a very difficult time for you and your family there is a responsibility for the transplanting teams to minimise the risk of transmitting viral infections to transplant recipients. It is routine to carry out full virology screen on all potential donors.

It may seem insensitive or even offensive but under guidelines we are obliged to list the following:

- *A man who has ever had sex with other men*
- *Has ever injected with non-prescriptive drugs*
- *May be infected with HIV or Hepatitis B or C or has had an injury over the past 12 months which could have put them at risk of acquiring these diseases*
- *Has ever received payment with money or drugs for sex*
- *Has been in prison for any significant period of time.*
- *Has had sex with a partner who has been sexually active in parts of the world where AIDS/HIV is common*

If any applies to your relative it is not necessary to identify the specific issue over which you have concerns but please be reassured that any information or concerns expressed will be treated with the strictest confidence.

**Having read the above information
To the best of your knowledge can donation
proceed safely?**

THE DONOR OPERATION

The operation to remove donated organs will take place in the operating theatres of this hospital under the same surgical conditions as any other operation. Specialist transplant teams will come to remove the donated organs. Specific recipients are identified for each of the organs donated and no organ will be removed unless there is a suitable recipient ready to receive that organ.

CARE OF THE DONOR

It is the highest priority of our teams to maintain dignity and respect for the deceased person throughout the entire donation process. When the operation is complete the surgeon closes the wound and a dressing is placed over it in the normal way. The appearance of the deceased person is not altered in any way by the donation operation nor does it delay or interfere with funeral arrangements.

TRANSPLANT CO-ORDINATOR

The transplant co-ordinator is available to meet with any potential donor family.

We are there to discuss the option of organ donation and answer any questions which may arise with regard to organ donation and transplantation.

We will ask you to sign a consent form and to indicate if you are aware of any risk factors from the list provided which would stop donation from proceeding.

The transplant co-ordinator is present in theatre during the donor operation and cares for the person after the procedure.

We will write to the donor family with news of each recipient who has benefited from the donation.

GREATEST GIFT

The gift of life is the greatest gift we receive. Each year in Ireland over 300 transplants take place each offering new life to so many. This new life is given by you – the family and friends of one held dearly – with your generous consideration of organ donation.



If you have any queries regarding organ donation you can contact the Transplant Co-ordinators at Beaumont Hospital

Tel: (01) 809 3000

INFORMATION FOR DONOR FAMILIES ON ORGAN DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION

DEPARTMENT OF ORGAN
PROCUREMENT
BEAUMONT HOSPITAL