

Organ and Tissue Donation opt out – Stakeholder and partner campaign toolkit

The law on organ and tissue donation is changing in Scotland on 26 March.



The Organ and Tissue Donation opt out campaign

From 26 March 2021, the law around organ and tissue donation in Scotland is changing to an opt out system.

Organ and tissue donation remains a personal decision and you have a choice. We encourage people to register their decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register and tell their family and friends as this will make it easier for them to honour their decision.



What are we asking you to do?

This change in law applies to everyone in Scotland aged 16 and over and so it is important that we get this message out. We are asking you to help us share relevant information with your specific audience groups, employees and customers to raise awareness of this important campaign. **We are urging everyone to make a decision about donation and we would appreciate your support in asking the same.**

Why?

Scotland has made huge strides in increasing transplant rates over the past decade, thanks to the generosity of those who choose to become donors and their families. Just one donor can save the lives of up to 9 people, and transform even more by donating tissue. The law is changing to save and improve lives.

The move to an opt out system is part of a package of measures to continue to improve transplantation rates – and the lives of those for whom the wait continues.

By helping to disseminate the campaign messaging, you are helping to raise awareness of organ and tissue donation and the importance of why people should consider making a decision around donation and record it.

Who are we talking to?

The campaign is looking to talk to everyone in Scotland 16 years of age and over.

We want everyone to know about the law change and what it means for them.

The new law won't apply to people under 16, those adults who lack capacity to understand the new law and adults who have lived in Scotland for less than one year.

Where can I find out more?

Here's where you can find out more about the law change and the choices everyone has.

For more information on key campaign messaging, visit organdonationscotland.org

A personal story about donation

Elaine Laing tells her story about the importance of discussing organ and tissue donation with your friends and family.

Organ and tissue donation remains a personal decision and everyone has a choice – to either register to be a donor or opt out of donation. But making that choice known is vital.

Backing the call for people to share their decision was Elaine Laing, 49, from Anstruther, who lost her husband Stephen suddenly in June 2019. She remembered a discussion they'd had years earlier, which helped ease the family's decision for donation to proceed.

Stephen was 51 when he died suddenly at home, eight days after cardiac surgery. The couple had discussed organ donation years earlier, joined the NHS Organ Donor Register, and had even asked their sons, Keir and Irvine, what they would want to happen.

Elaine said: *“Stephen wanted to be an organ donor, but because he had a heart attack at home, that wasn't possible. In the hospital quite quickly after we lost him, we were approached by a specialist nurse to discuss the possibility of him being a tissue donor, as he was on the organ donor register.*

I immediately said that they could take what they needed, with no hesitation. I just asked if I could speak to my boys, and they agreed wholeheartedly.

I never thought I'd find myself in that position. I was utterly devastated, my guiding light had just gone out. But as a family we knew it was what he would have wanted, and the hospital handled everything so sensitively and with empathy, that it didn't feel intrusive.”

Stephen donated his heart valves and corneas to help save and improve the lives of others – something that has continued to bring the family great comfort over a year on from their loss.

[Find out more about your choices and who the law applies to here.](#)

Help us by sharing our messages

It is important that we communicate to as many people as possible, through organisations and businesses like yours, that the law around organ and tissue donation is changing to an opt out system.

There are a few ways you can help disseminate this important campaign messaging.

Follow Organ Donation Scotland on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Follow our social pages and re-share content directly through your channels:



If you would like guidance on re-sharing content, please contact organdonation@leith.co.uk and a member of the team will be able to help.

Organ Donation opt out campaign assets

We have also provided links to campaign information and assets below.

- Share the campaign messaging on social media with a [static social image](#) and [suggested text](#)
- Include some [editorial text](#) on the campaign within your newsletter or on your company website
- Share an electronic version of the [poster](#) with your colleagues and customers
- We have made print versions of the [poster](#) available to print on a photocopier

Social posts

Show your support on social media by using the suggested text:

Scotland is moving to an opt out system of organ and tissue donation from 26 March. Find out what it means for you, and your choices.

[organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

From 26 March, the law around organ and tissue donation in Scotland is changing. Everyone has a choice - to be a donor or opt out of donation.

Find out more, or opt out. [organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

From 26 March, if you're 16 or over you'll be considered a possible organ and tissue donor when you die, unless you opt out. Find out more about the law change, or opt out.

[organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

Be a donor or opt out – we all have a choice under Scotland's new organ and tissue donation law. You can record your decision here at any time.

[organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

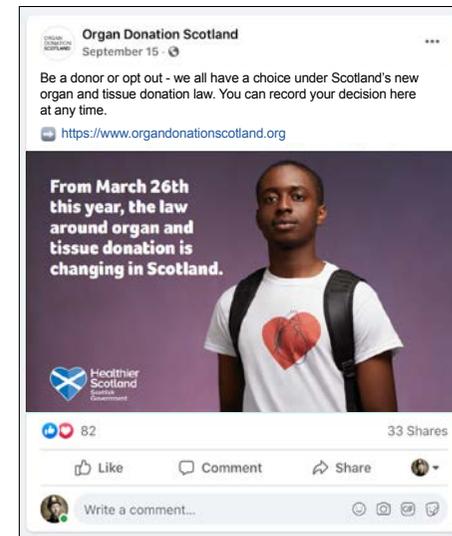
Organ and tissue donation isn't something that comes up in conversation but making time to talk to your family and friends about your donation decision means they'll be able to honour it. Find out more

[organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

If something was to happen to you unexpectedly, would your family know your latest organ donation decision? Record it on the NHS Organ Donor Register and share it with them today. Find out more about

Scotland's law change. [organdonationscotland.org](https://www.organdonationscotland.org)

Example social posts



For more information please
contact the Partnership team at
organdonation@leith.co.uk

To discuss partnering for PR, please
contact our PR agency Smarts at
organdonation@smarts.agency

