



## Organ and Tissue Donation Opt out System and what this means for you

As you approach the age of 16 you're probably starting to think about some important decisions, like studying or jobs. One decision you might like to think about is whether or not you want to be an organ and tissue donor.

This letter is to make you aware of the law on organ and tissue donation in Scotland which applies from age 16, and the choices you have. The law is known as a system of 'deemed authorisation'. This is often referred to as an 'opt out' system and it means that you will be considered to have agreed to be a donor when you die, unless you choose to opt out.

You have a choice about whether you want to be a donor or not. You can find more detailed information about your choices on the next page. Your name will not be on the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR) until you record your decision, so whether you choose to be a donor or opt out of donation, you should record this on the ODR. It's also important that you share your decision with your parent/guardian, family, friends, or those closest to you, so they know what you would want to happen as they can help to make sure your decision is honoured.

### Recording your decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register

Go **online** at [www.organdonationscotland.org](http://www.organdonationscotland.org) or by **telephone**: 0300 123 23 23. Calls will be charged at local call rates depending on your phone provider.

Or, **request a registration form** by writing to **NHS Blood & Transplant, FREEPOST RRZKSHUX-SBCK, NHSBT, Fox Den Road, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8RR**. Please include your full postal address in the correspondence.

### Other formats of this letter and accessible registration

This letter is available in Easy Read, British Sign Language, Braille, audio and large print. It has also been translated into multiple languages. Visit [www.organdonationscotland.org/resources](http://www.organdonationscotland.org/resources) or use the contact details above to request this letter in an accessible format.

You can register your donation decision by **text chat**: 07860 034343 or **text relay**: 18001 0300 1232323. You can also contact **ContactSCOTLAND-BSL** [www.contactscotland-bsl.org](http://www.contactscotland-bsl.org) where a **video interpreter** can relay calls.

For your information, the Scottish Government does not have access to your personal data for the purposes of sending out this letter. We have asked NHS National Services Scotland, who manage and protect this data to help with the distribution of this letter. You can find out more information about this at [www.nhsns.org/services/practitioner/data-protection](http://www.nhsns.org/services/practitioner/data-protection).

## ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION POLICY TEAM



## Who the law applies to

The law applies to anyone age 16 and over, apart from a person who has lived in Scotland for less than 12 months at the time of death or someone who would not be able to understand the law, for example someone with a learning disability. People in these groups can still register a decision, but if they don't and they die in circumstances in which they can donate then their family will be asked to make a decision about donation.

## Your decision

Whatever you decide – whether it's to be a donor or to opt out of donation, you should tell your parent/guardian and family so they know what you would want to happen. If you're unsure about whether you want to donate or not, talking about it with a parent/guardian, trusted adult or with family and friends might help you make a decision.

## Your choices

Only around 1% of the population will die in circumstances where it is possible to be an organ donor, so every opportunity for donation is very precious. Donation is a personal decision and you have a choice about whether or not you want to donate. You can also change your decision at any point. These are your choices:

### You can record your decision to opt out of donation on the NHS Organ Donor Register

- This means that you are opting out of donation of all organs and tissue.

### If you want to be a donor, you should record this decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register

- By doing this, it will make it easier for your family and help to ensure your donation decision is honoured.
- If you would be willing to donate some types of organs and tissue, but not others, you can make your choices clear when you record your decision.
- Recording your decision to be a donor will also mean that you agree to certain medical tests and procedures that may be carried out before your death as part of the donation process, such as blood or urine samples or xrays/ultrasound scans etc. Specialist nurses would speak to your family before these take place. Find out more at [www.organdonationscotland.org/testsandprocedures](http://www.organdonationscotland.org/testsandprocedures)
- You can record whether your faith or beliefs are important to you on the NHS Organ Donor Register and this will be considered as part of the donation discussion with your family.

### If you do nothing and don't record your decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register

If you choose to do nothing, your name will not be on the NHS Organ Donor Register and there will be no decision recorded for you. This means that:

- It will be assumed that you agree to donate certain organs and tissue for transplantation when you die.
- Your family and friends will still be asked your latest views to ensure donation doesn't go ahead if you wouldn't have wanted it to.
- It will also mean that you agree to certain medical tests and procedures that may be carried out before your death as part of the donation process, such as blood or urine samples or xrays/ultrasound scans etc. Specialist nurses will speak to your family before these take place. Find out more at [www.organdonationscotland.org/testsandprocedures](http://www.organdonationscotland.org/testsandprocedures)

You can read more about the opt out system of organ and tissue donation and what would happen if you become a donor in this information leaflet [www.organdonationscotland.org/information-leaflet](http://www.organdonationscotland.org/information-leaflet).

If you, your parent/guardian or family need further assistance to understand what the organ and tissue donation opt out system means for you, please call **0300 123 23 23**.