

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FAO: LOCAL REPORTERS**

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June

**LOCAL MSP WELCOMES THE UNVEILING OF NEW PLANS FOR SOFT OPT-OUT ORGAN DONATION SYSTEM**

**MOVES BACKED BY MAJORITY OF SCOTS CONSULTED**

Kirkcaldy Constituency's SNP MSP David Torrance has welcomed the Scottish Government's decision to introduce legislation for a soft opt-out system of organ and tissue donation, which was backed by 82% of those who contributed to their consultation.

The 14-week consultation looked at various ways to increase the number of people being referred to the donation services in Scotland.

Currently in Scotland, organ and/or tissue donation after a person's death only occurs if they have given advance authorisation or if their nearest relative authorises on their behalf.

A soft opt out, or deemed authorisation system, means that a donation can go ahead if the person has not opted out or told their family they do not wish to donate.

Commenting David Torrance MSP said:

"Today's decision to legislate for a soft opt-out system is great news for our health service.

"With the amazing help of donors and their families, NHS Scotland has already made great progress, including a 34% increase in donors this past year alone. Scotland now has the highest donor rate in the UK.

"However, we can do better and moving to a soft opt-out system is a really important step towards further reducing the number of people in and around Kirkcaldy waiting for transplants.

"We should always keep in mind the tragic circumstances that give rise to organ donation and forever appreciate the selfless acts of donors and their families that enable others to live. Organ and tissue donation saves lives and is one of the greatest gifts a person can give."

**ENDS**

NOTES

<https://news.gov.scot/news/increasing-organ-and-tissue-donation>

Background

- The consultation ran from 7 December 2016 to 14 March 2017.
- Anyone wishing to join the Organ Donor Register can do so by visiting the Organ Donation Scotland website. This website can also be used by those who wish to update their registration details or to register their wish not to be a donor.

The Donation and Transplantation Plan, 2013-2020 has been the catalyst for meaningful improvement in organ donation in Scotland with:

- 146% increase (54-133 between 2007/8 and 2016/17) in the number of people who donated organs after their death.
- In 2016/17, Scotland had the highest rate of donors per million of population of any UK country – currently 25.5 donors per million of population.
- 45% of the Scottish population have joined the organ donor register (over 116,000 in 2016).

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

**Zoe Hisbent**

*Office Manager for David Torrance MSP*

E-mail: [zoe.hisbent@parliament.scot](mailto:zoe.hisbent@parliament.scot)

Phone: 01592 200349