



Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Advisory Council

Communiqué 20 July 2010

The eighth meeting of the Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Advisory Council was chaired by Mr Sam Chisholm in Sydney on 20 July 2010.

The Advisory Council was established under the *Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Act 2008* to advise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Organ and Tissue Authority (the "Authority") about organ or tissue donation and transplantation matters.

The Advisory Council comprises members with substantial experience or knowledge of public administration, an organ or tissue donation and/or transplantation matter, business, management, finance, health consumer issues or other appropriate fields of expertise. Members are appointed by the Minister for Health and Ageing and the following members were present at the 20 July 2010 meeting:

Mr Sam Chisholm (Chairman)
Ms Anne Cahill-Lambert AM
Professor Don Chalmers
Professor Jeremy Chapman OAM
Professor Geoff Dobb
Dr Marisa Herson
Professor John Horvath AO
Mr David Koch
Dr Amanda Rischbieth
Dr Dianne Stephens OAM
Professor Russell Strong AC

Members Dr David Boadle, Dr Anthony Cross and Ms Rachael Martin were unable to attend.

The eighth meeting of the Council focussed on ensuring that the Australian Government's national reform agenda (of establishing a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation to address the shortage of organ and tissue donations in Australia) is on track.

To that end, the a/g CEO briefed Council on progress against each of the nine reform measures set out in the reform agenda against the dual objectives of:

- achieving significant system reform within public hospitals around Australia so that there is strong direction, support and education offered to hospital staff involved in organ and tissue donation to lift identification and conversion rates; and
- raising community awareness about the need for increased organ and tissue donation to improve the rate of family consent.



The a/g CEO highlighted that since the seventh meeting of the Council an increase in the organ donation rates had been achieved and sustained:

- The number of organ donors in May (30) and the number of organ donors in June (31) were both the highest ever recorded figures for these months;
- For the first six months of this year Australia had 149 organ donors, the highest number of donors for the first six months of any year in the last decade. The next highest for the first six months was 120 in 2008; and
- If the current trend continues we could reach 298 donors for the year, which will give Australia a donors per million population (DPMP) rate of 13.4, up from 11.3 DPMP in 2009.

The a/g CEO reported that progress across all of the nine measures should assist the further improvement in organ donation rates in the future, noting that reporting of eye and tissue donation rates needs to be given equal prominence in future reporting of donation rates.

The CEO's report to Council included reference to:

1. The development of a National Strategy and its release on the website, thanking Advisory Council members for their input into this document. Sitting under Measure 1 of the reform package, a National Strategy available in the public space confirms the Government's commitment to increasing organ and tissue donation rates in Australia, and outlines the high level strategic priorities (including measurable performance targets) for the Authority to achieve this.
2. The further enhancement of the strong foundation of system reform in public hospitals over the past 12 months through the establishment of the DonateLife agencies (Measure 1) and hospital based staff (Measure 2) through:
 - leadership from the Chair of the Council who met with State Medical Directors from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory as well as the National Medical Director (by phone) on 12 May 2010 in Canberra. The a/g CEO and the a/g General Manager of the Authority, together with Professor John Horvarth also participated. The discussion focussed on the need for improving identification of intended donors and increasing consent rates;
 - the substantial revision of the performance framework for the Authority, the DonateLife agencies and the hospital based staff (including to highlight responsibilities in relation to eye and tissue donation). This included clarifying roles and responsibilities of staff within the Network (including hospital based staff) and measurable performance indicators linked to reporting. Performance indicators have been incorporated into funding agreements between the Authority and each jurisdiction, and linked to reporting requirements;
 - a re-engagement of Directors-General of State and Territory Health Departments by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing;

- monthly meetings between the Authority and State Medical Directors, joined where appropriate by representatives of the State and Territory health departments. This enables closer collaboration on activities to both improve performance within hospitals and changing community attitudes to organ and tissue donation; and
 - enhancements to both the qualitative and quantitative data gathered on a hospital by hospital basis including:
 - Ensuring that the Death Audit is conducted in a nationally consistent way from quarter one 2010-11, supported by identified resources within each DonateLife Agency; and
 - discussions between the Authority and each of the State Medical Directors to draw out their understanding of what is happening on a hospital by hospital basis within each jurisdiction.
3. Re-engagement of the non-government sector in the effort to achieve a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation:
- the Council's sub-group nominated at the seventh meeting of Council (Anne Cahill Lambert, Rachel Martin and Amanda Rischbieth) have been working with the Authority on the development of a strategy for systemic consultation with NGOs in the implementation, review and further development of protocols and guidelines developed to support the reform agenda (all Measures including Measures 7 and 9);
 - redevelopment of the Charter of Signatories (Measure 5);
 - development of the National Strategy document (Measure 1);
 - implementation of the national campaign (Measure 5);
 - renegotiation of funding agreements between the Authority and NGOs to provide improved synchronicity between the national reform agenda and the products being purchased through those agreements (Measure 5);
 - improved engagement with the eye and tissue sector including to inform the workplan (Measure 8); and
 - a second round of community grants with better alignment between the national reform agenda (specifically the national campaign) and funded activities (Measure 5).
4. Active engagement and support of Charter Signatories in the implementation of the National Awareness Campaign (Measure 5):
- on Wednesday 12 May 2010 the a/g CEO issued all Charter signatories with the DonateLife Partner logo and Style Guide which will achieve increased awareness of DonateLife on an ongoing basis as well as through the campaign period; and
 - on Wednesday 12 May 2010 the a/g CEO hosted a briefing of all Charter Signatories prior to the launch of the Campaign with the goal of ensuring strong knowledge about and understanding of the campaign materials and messages. Council member David Koch provided valuable support to this endeavour by sharing his insights into organ and tissue donation.

The Council was pleased to note substantive progress against each of the nine measures.

In addition to reporting on implementation of the reform measures, the a/g CEO reported on the other two priorities identified to the Council on 20 April 2010:

- to further improve the organisational capability and capacity of the Authority the a/g CEO reported that: the structure of the Authority had been realigned to better reflect work priorities; job roles are being revised and will be in place with a performance framework by the end of the first quarter; an Enterprise Agreement had been developed and is now in place, following negotiation with staff, the Department and relevant Ministers; and work to improve the data analysis and reporting capacity of the Authority has begun; and
- to ensure the skills base and structure of the Authority clearly aligns to the nine measures of the Reform Agenda the number of staff involved in business support activities in the Authority has been decreased, whilst additional clinical capacity has been recruited, enabling an improved focus on delivering the reform agenda.

The a/g CEO sought advice from Council on a number of issues including next steps in the review of the current structure of the Authority's committees, to determine whether it is the most efficient and effective way of providing practical solutions and technical advice to the CEO, to support implementation of a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation. This had been progressed in line with the Council's April 2010 advice.

Council advised that the number of committees should be minimised and asked the a/g CEO to report back on progress at the next Council meeting.

The a/g CEO also sought advice on the proposed work program in relation to the Eye and Tissue sector noting that this had been progressed in line with Council's previous advice with input from Dr Marisa Herson, Professor John Horvarth, the Department of Health and Ageing and informed by discussions between the National Medical Director, the a/g CEO, representatives of the State Medical Directors network, the Australian Tissue Biotherapeutics Forum and other stakeholders. Following consideration of the workplan by Council and subject to Council's advice, the work program is to be further considered by State Medical Directors on 22 July 2010.

Council advised that the Authority should prepare a discussion paper proposing a process for national reform. Council also asked Dr Herson to give a presentation on the eye and tissue sector to the Council at the next meeting.

Council provided advice on a number of other key issues including:

1. Data collection and sharing;
2. Donor Family Support resources; and
3. Professional education resources.

These issues will be discussed further at the next Council meeting

Media contact: Kay McNeice 0412 132 585

Report to the Council – implementation of advice provided at the seventh meeting of the Advisory Council.

On 20 April 2010 at the seventh meeting of the Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Advisory Council, the Council provided advice to the a/g Chief Executive Officer on a number of key elements. Council's advice was reflected in the Communiqué of that meeting.

Following is a report to Council on implementation of its advice of 20 April 2010 with reference to the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of the Council.

1. The Council indicated that a renewed and sustained effort to further reform the major public hospitals is a fundamental requirement to achieving a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation. The Council agreed that a small group headed by the Council's Chair, Sam Chisholm, would engage in discussions to achieve further reforms, including with State Medical Directors of the DonateLife Network, key CEOs of hospitals, and Chief Medical Officers in State Health Departments. This group will report back at the next meeting of the Advisory Council.

The Chair of the Council met with State Medical Directors from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory as well as the National Medical Director (by phone) on 12 May in Canberra. The a/g CEO and the a/g General Manager of the Authority, together with Professor John Horvarth also participated. The discussion focussed on the need for improving identification of intended donors and increasing consent rates.

Subsequently, the National Medical Director and senior staff from the Authority have met with State Medical Directors, DonateLife agency staff and hospital based staff in each jurisdiction with the aim of the Authority re-engaging with the DonateLife agencies in each jurisdiction. These discussions have been useful including to build relationships between senior Authority staff and the agencies and provide an opportunity for Authority staff to hear directly from agencies about successes and challenges in fulfilling their roles.

Since the seventh meeting of Council, the a/g CEO has initiated a process to, in collaboration with State Medical Directors, substantially revise the performance framework for the Authority, the DonateLife agencies and the hospital based staff (including to highlight responsibilities in relation to eye and tissue donation). As set out in the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of Council, this includes clarifying roles and responsibilities of staff within the Network and measurable performance indicators linked to reporting.

The agenda papers for the eighth meeting also highlight that this work is underpinned by the National Strategy developed with input from Council members and other key stakeholders as well as a re-engagement of Directors-General of State and Territory Health Departments by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing. In addition, the a/g CEO has, with the support and agreement of State Medical Directors, replaced meetings of the DonateLife Expert Advisory Committee with monthly meetings between the Authority and State Medical Directors, joined where appropriate by representatives of the State and Territory health departments. This enables closer collaboration on activities to both improve performance within hospitals and changing community attitudes to organ and tissue donation.

Other relevant activities since the last meeting of Council and as referenced in the agenda papers for the eight meeting are enhancements to both the qualitative and quantitative data gathered on a hospital by hospital basis including:

- ensuring that the Death Audit is conducted in a nationally consistent way from the first quarter of 2010-11, supported by identified resources within each DonateLife Agency. This process will be led by the National Medical Director; and
 - discussions between the Authority and each of the State Medical Directors to draw out their understanding of what is happening on a hospital by hospital basis within each jurisdiction.
2. The Council advised that the non-government sector should be re-engaged in the effort to achieve a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation. The a/g CEO was asked to work with a sub-group of the Council to agree on and commence work to engage NGOs to a greater degree in the reform agenda. The a/g CEO will report on progress and achievements at the next meeting of the Council.

As reflected in the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of Council, the sub-group nominated at the seventh meeting of Council (Anne Cahill Lambert, Rachel Martin and Amanda Rischbieth) are informing the development of a strategy for systemic consultation with NGOs in the implementation, review and further development of protocols and guidelines developed to support the reform agenda.

As reflected in the agenda papers, re-engagement of the non-government sector has also been progressed on a number of fronts including through the:

- redevelopment of the Charter of Signatories;
 - development of the National Strategy document;
 - implementation of the national campaign;
 - renegotiation of funding agreements between the Authority and NGOs to provide improved synchronicity between the national reform agenda and the products being purchased through those agreements;
 - improved engagement with the eye and tissue sector including to inform the workplan; and
 - second round of community grants with better alignment between the national reform agenda (specifically the national campaign) and funded activities.
3. Clear lines of accountability and communication need to be reinforced between the Authority and the DonateLife Network, encompassing a single strategic direction which is underpinned by common actions. To that end, the National Medical Director will work with State Medical Directors to ensure a single strategic plan and work plan is implemented across all DonateLife partners. The National Medical Director will report on progress and achievements at the next Council meeting.

As reflected in the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of Council, clear lines of accountability and communication between the Authority and the DonateLife Network has been established. Specifically:

- funding agreements between the Authority and each of the jurisdictions have been revised to clarify roles and responsibilities including for DonateLife staff and hospital based staff, performance indicators have been included and reporting requirements clarified;
- in relation to reports from jurisdictions, the a/g CEO has committed to active review of these reports and will provide each jurisdiction with feedback. In addition, the a/g CEO will prepare and disseminate a thematic report drawing out issues common across jurisdictions;
- the a/g CEO has formed the State Medical Directors Committee which is a meeting monthly (with representatives of State and Territory health departments included where appropriate); and
- the Authority's National Strategy has been developed in consultation with the Advisory Council and State Medical Directors.

The change management process outlined in the agenda papers should further enhance a common approach to the national reform agenda.

4. The current structure of the Authority's committees should be reviewed to determine whether it is the most efficient and effective way of providing practical solutions and technical advice to the CEO to support implementation of a World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation. The Council advised that the a/g CEO should progress this review of the role and structure of the committees and working groups and report progress at the next meeting of the Council.

The review of the Authority's committee structure has been progressed. A draft report for consideration and further advice from Council was included in the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of Council.

5. Progress needs to be made to articulate a work program in the Eye and Tissue sector. The Council advised that the a/g CEO and the National Medical Director should meet with Dr Marisa Herson, Professor John Horvath and senior representatives of the Department of Health and Ageing to identify the respective roles of the Authority and the Department in this area and to establish a clear work plan, with milestones for the Authority. The a/g CEO will report progress at the next meeting of the Council.

A work program has been developed in relation to the eye and tissue sector and is included for Council consideration and advice in the agenda papers for the eighth meeting of Council. The work program has been developed with input from Dr Marisa Herson, Professor John Horvath, the Department of Health and Ageing and informed by discussions between the National Medical Director, the a/g CEO, representatives of the State Medical Directors network, the Australian Tissue Biotherapeutics Forum and other stakeholders. Following consideration of the workplan by Council and subject to Council's advice, the work program is to be further considered by State Medical Directors on 22 July 2010.

6. The National Community Awareness Campaign should be framed with maximum involvement with key partners and stakeholders to ensure maximum effectiveness of the campaign. The a/g CEO will progress this with the small group of Council members working on re-engaging the NGO sector and report on progress at the next meeting of the Council.

To this end, on 12 May 2010 the a/g CEO issued all Charter signatories with the DonateLife Partner logo and Style Guide which will achieve increased awareness of DonateLife on an ongoing basis as well as through the campaign period.

The a/g CEO hosted a briefing of all Charter Signatories prior to the launch of the Campaign with the goal of ensuring strong knowledge about and understanding of the campaign materials and messages. Council member David Koch provided valuable support to this endeavour by sharing his insights into organ and tissue donation.

7. The Council acknowledged the a/g CEO's work in relation to her immediate priorities and her advice that clinical and data analysis skills would need to be further built within the Authority to achieve the work priorities over the next two years.

The a/g CEO has now revised the structure of the Authority to better reflect the work to be progressed under the National Reform Agenda.