



The DonateLife State Medical Directors' Committee

Communiqué 10 February 2011

The eighth meeting of the DonateLife State Medical Directors' Committee was held on Thursday 10 February 2011.

DonateLife is an Australia wide network of organ and tissue donation agencies and hospital-based staff dedicated to organ and tissue donation. Under the leadership of the Organ and Tissue Authority, State Medical Directors (SMDs) in every state and territory are responsible for delivery of the national reform program in their respective jurisdictions.

The DonateLife State Medical Directors' Committee was established as a governance committee to consider and make recommendations to the Authority in respect of the strategic priorities, clinical and data governance, planning and leadership of the DonateLife Network, and the implementation at a state-based level of the World's Best Practice Approach National Reform Package on Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation.

The DonateLife State Medical Directors' Committee comprises the CEO (Chair), the National Medical Director (NMD) and the SMDs of each State and Territory, including:

Ms Yael Cass (CEO)
Dr Gerry O'Callaghan (NMD)
Dr Jonathan Gillis (NSW)
Dr Greg Hollis (a/g ACT SMD)
Dr Helen Opdam (VIC)
Dr Phillip Sargent (QLD)
Dr Sarah Collins (NT – via teleconference)
Dr Sally Tideman (SA)
Dr Andrew Turner (TAS)
Dr Kevin Yuen (WA)

The eighth meeting was chaired by Ms Yael Cass, the newly appointed CEO of the Organ and Tissue Authority, and attended by eight SMDs, senior officials from the State and Territory Health Departments and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, and former Acting CEO, Ms Liz Cain. The addition of officials from all health departments ensures that the efforts of the DonateLife staff reflect state and Australian government policies and processes, that legislative and funding implications are well understood by relevant departments and promotes a nationally consistent and coordinated approach to increasing organ donor rates in Australia.

Organ Donation Performance Update – Looking Back on 2010

The Committee noted and commented on the national and Jurisdictional organ donation performance for the 2010 calendar year noting the achievements in the first full year post-reform.

Priorities for 2011

The Committee noted the priorities for 2011 were considered at the 3 February 2011 meeting of the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council and the paper was referred to the Australian Health Ministers' Council (AHMC) for consideration on 17 February 2011.

The Chair sought further comments on the priorities for 2011 from members noting that:

- the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, the Catherine King MP, will write to Health Ministers outlining the specific goals for each state and territory and seeking development of a strategy for achievement of the target; and
- the Authority will undertake bilateral discussions with each jurisdiction about strategies for increasing donation rates to meet the 2011 targets.

The Committee agreed to provide comments on the priorities for 2011.

The Committee noted that the first full year of death audit data is available and once cleansed, will be distributed to members.

Calendar of Key Events

The Committee noted and commented on the national calendar of events for 2011.

The Committee agreed to provide a copy of jurisdictional calendars for distribution.

Commercialisation of Human Tissue Products

The Committee noted the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC's) intention to release the background and issues paper, Commercialisation of Human Tissue Products, in September 2011.

The Committee agreed to provide comment of the paper by 30 April 2011.

The Committee also agree to the Authority working with DonateLife Communications Officers to develop a national media strategy for the release of the paper.

Progress of the National Reform Agenda

The Committee reviewed progress against the nine Measures which comprise the Australian Government's reform package.

Measure 1: A new national approach and system – a national Authority and network of organ and tissue donation agencies

The intent of Measure 1 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia by establishing for the first time in Australia, a nationally coordinated approach to organ retrieval based on world's best practice models.

The Organ and Tissue Authority has been established as a new, independent authority to provide national leadership to the organ and tissue sector and to drive, implement and monitor national reform initiatives and programs. In addition, Organ and Tissue Agencies have been established in each State and Territory, headed by a State or Territory Medical Director and funded by the Authority to coordinate, oversee, lead and report to the Authority on actions taken in each state and territory under the reform program.

Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery Planning

The Committee noted the recent Queensland experience of coping with natural disasters.

The Committee discussed their current Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans within the context of the Queensland Disaster Response Analysis and the recent natural disasters during the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

The Committee agreed to refer the drafting of a generic national business continuity planning framework to the Agency Managers' meeting.

Annual Forum

The Committee discussed the 2011 DonateLife Network Annual Forum to be held in Sydney during the last week in March 2011. The purpose of the Forum is to educate and train members of the DonateLife Network. The Committee noted the draft program and agreed to participate as moderators for speaking sessions.

Measure 2: Specialist hospital staff and systems dedicated to organ donation

The intent of Measure 2 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia by providing funding for selected public and private hospitals to employ trained, medical specialists dedicated to organ donation. Since 1 January 2009 the Authority has made available funding to each State and Territory Government, with the effect that 160 doctors and nurses in 76 key hospitals throughout Australia now work as specialist organ and tissue donation clinicians, leading improved clinical staff education and awareness to increase organ and tissue donation rates in hospitals. The State Medical Directors and their DonateLife staff in each jurisdiction work closely with these hospital based staff to implement the hospital based reforms, monitoring and guiding the performance of each hospital.

Agency Managers Meeting Outcomes

The Committee noted the outcomes of the first DonateLife Network Agency Managers meeting on 16 December 2010.

In response to issues raised by the Agency Managers, the Committee agreed to consider appropriate models and external support structures to provide after-hours clinical support at the initial SMD clinical meeting.

The Committee noted the recommendations regarding Agency Managers' developmental needs and agreed that responsibility for progressing this issue lies with each individual SMD and jurisdiction.

Measure 3: New funding for hospitals

The intent of Measure 3 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia by providing new funding to public and private hospitals to address the additional staffing, bed and other infrastructure costs associated with organ and tissue donation. The Australian Government, through the Authority has been providing States and Territories with this additional funding, based on the activities within hospitals, since July 2009.

Organ Donation Hospital Support Funding (ODHSF)

The Committee noted the Organ Donation Hospital Support Funding (ODHSF) report, and discussed the application of the ODHSF and its effectiveness.

The Committee agreed to facilitate the finalisation of the 2010-2012 ODHSF funding agreements.

Measure 4: Coordinated, Ongoing Professional Awareness and Education

The intent of Measure 4 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia through an ongoing, nationally consistent and targeted program of recognised professional development and training, coordinated by the Authority.

National Professional Awareness and Education

The Committee noted that a provider has been selected to develop two 'Family Conversation' training modules and agreed to the nominated project team.

The Committee noted the funding model for ADAPT workshops available for their respective jurisdictions and agreed to provide advice on appropriate DonateLife staff who could be trained to deliver ADAPT workshops.

The Committee agreed to the next step to include organ and tissue donation into school education programs i.e. source a provider to develop a package of education resources targeted a senior secondary students. The Committee noted that the Authority is continuing to consult with Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority to incorporate organ and tissue donation into the national curriculum for 2012.

Measure 5: National Community Awareness and Education Program

The intent of Measure 5 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia through an ongoing, coordinated and evidence based national community awareness and education program which will increase knowledge about organ and tissue donation and transplantation and build public confidence in Australia's new donation system. The program includes phased advertising campaign activity together with other community awareness and education initiatives.

The key aim of the National Community Awareness and Education Program is to increase Australia's low family consent rate from 58% to 75% by 30 June 2012.

DonateLife Week

The Committee noted the activities of the Communications Reference Group, the progress of the DonateLife Week activities and the ongoing DonateLife campaign.

The Committee viewed the "Book of Life" and TV campaigns planned for DonateLife Week. Committee Members noted and positively reviewed the TV campaign creative planned for DonateLife Week and for phase two campaign activity.

Measure 6: Support for Donor Families

The intent of Measure 6 is that through a nationally coordinated approach deceased donor families will be provided with respectful support which is responsive to the needs of each family.

Support for Donor Families

The Committee agreed to put the Donor Family Support (DFS) Discussion Record form on hold until further review by the DFS Implementation Group and to discuss the checklist for nurses overseeing donations through the DFS working group.

Measure 7: Safe, equitable and transparent national transplantation process

Under this measure, the Authority, in collaboration with the relevant professional societies, is responsible for maintaining and auditing the implementation of approved national transplantation protocols and standards. This will ensure that the management of

transplant waiting lists and the allocation of organs and tissues is effective, equitable and transparent, regardless of where the donor and recipient reside.

Prior to the Authority's establishment, the Transplant Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) were engaged to develop nationally consistent, safe, equitable and transparent process for the management of transplantation waiting lists and the allocation of donated organs across Australia.

TSANZ Consensus Statement Update/Way Forward

The Committee noted the progress of the implementation and review of the TSANZ Consensus Statement. The Authority is continuing to work with TSANZ to finalise the document. TSANZ has been invited to meet with NHMRC and the Authority to discuss a process for maintaining the currency and development of the next iteration.

Measure 8: National Eye and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Network

The intent of Measure 8 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia by introducing systems that will deliver a coordinated, accountable, national tissue transplantation service for patients across Australia.

Update and agree to the Chair of the Eye and Tissue Working Group Communications Paper

The Committee noted that Dr Phil Sargent has agreed to Chair the Eye and Tissue Working Group. Work has been done on terms of reference with a focus on developing options for more efficient processes for retrieval and storage of eyes and tissues.

The Committee sought clarification around the scope of the Therapeutic Goods Administration's Biologicals Framework and agreed to provide advice to the Authority on the potential impact of the framework on the eye and tissue sector including estimated direct regulatory costs of compliance.

The Committee made comment on the available data collection and methodology for eye and tissue donation and noted gaps in current data analysis, undertaking to further refine this capacity over time.

The Committee noted the Authority is in discussion with Australia New Zealand Organ Donor Registry (ANZOD) about taking responsibility for collection and analysis of tissue data. ANZOD is keen to undertake this function. The Australian Tissue Banking Forum, through its Chair, Ms Anne Cowie, has expressed support for this consideration.

The Committee noted the eye and tissue activity Communications Paper and agreed to provide comments.

Measure 9: Additional national initiatives, including living donation programs

The intent of Measure 9 is to increase organ and tissue donation rates in Australia by establishing national protocols to guide initiatives including the practice of 'paired kidney exchange' between living donors and recipients, and living donor liver transplantation.

The two major items in Measure 9 are the Australian Paired Kidney Exchange (AKX) Program and the Donation after Cardiac Death protocol (DCD).

The AKX Program aims to maximise the number of live donor kidney transplants that can

be performed in Australia by identifying biologically compatible donor/recipient pairs.

AKX Program

The Committee also noted the schedule of match runs for 2011 and discussed the geographic distribution of enrolled donor and recipient pairs.

The Committee noted that the second match run has occurred and, pending tissue typing, there could be a six way donor/recipient exchange.

The Committee discussed the issue of reimbursement for interstate travel for kidney donors and the need to consider a nationally consistent approach. The Committee noted the Department of Health and Ageing has provided advice on this issue to the Parliamentary Secretary for consideration.

The Committee agreed to the establishment of an oversight committee to support the AKX program and that the standing committee would discuss the issue of nationally consistent policy of interstate travel for AKX.

Implementation of the National Protocol for DCD

The Committee agreed to complete identified gaps in the DCD aggregated implementation plan.

Next meeting

The Committee agreed the next meeting will be held in Canberra on 14 April 2011.