

BY: Gay

G. Mc Veagh

30/07/08

Review of Organ & Tissue Donation Procedures Select Committee,
Parliament of Queensland
Corner George and Alice Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Attention: Research Director

Dear Sir/Madam,

SUBMISSION for your CONSIDERATION

I, as a registered donor to the Organ and Tissue scheme in Australia, do submit, with respect, my views as to how to improve donor numbers in Australia which appear presently to be well below other developed nations worldwide.

Submission

1. Whilst living in Spain during 2007, I saw that the "Presumed Consent" was working to the considerable advantage to the population. Very few families revoke the right of the State to harvest parts from a deceased and where they do, the authorities do not bring pressure to bear on the family to change their attitude.
2. I believe that lack of education in the benefits to the community at large, is a problem in Australia. I believe that the education of the public should be carried out. Newspaper advertisements rarely are read by newspaper buyers so a different approach should be made by:
 - a) Pamphlets in surgeries, hospitals, and medical centre waiting rooms
 - b) By trained medical/social professionals speaking to family in hospital situations where a terminally ill person is located.
 - c) General Practitioners should also brief families who have a member likely to die, as to the merits of allowing donations of organs and/or tissue.
 - d) In pre-natal clinics to advise expectant mothers that, should by some mischance, their baby be still born or die very young, that they can benefit the community by donation of organs and/or tissues.
3. Posters in railway and bus stations, in Transport department general offices, at motor or motorbike rallies or races to show a 'human face' to organ donation.

Religious and Traditional Objections on Treatment of Bodies

There are sects and others who by tradition must dispose of the dead by their customs. Again, accept for objections at the time of death, the deceased should be treated, as would be the body of other members of the community.

Where strong objections to organ and tissue donations are publicised by a sect or traditional group, then members of the objector groups should be placed at the bottom of the recipient waiting list. A case of either join us or opt out totally.

Post Donation Procedures

Under various State legislations, the person who receives an organ donation is not allowed to know the origin of the organ even though they may wish to thank in person, the donors family.

1. I submit that this be changed Federally and over rule the States various laws. After all, this is 2008 and not 1901 when social mores were vastly different.
2. I submit that where a donor's family is agreeable, that they sign a release allowing this information to be available to the recipient of the transplant.
3. An address is not necessary but a point of contact, ei email or phone number should be sufficient to allow either party to make contact.
4. Again, the recipient of a donated organ should be able to agree to the donor's family knowing the name if not the address, of the recipient. We believe that in a number of cases that this give a happier closure to the deceased person's family and give a feel good atmosphere to the recipient.

Summary

At present, the donor and tissue procedure is top heavy and does little for our Australian community. Few people bother to register, you have to write a letter and to whom? Even (Queensland) when citizens were able to have the donor advise installed on the licence, did not work well as families immediately they have a family death become defensive of the body as the majority of people lack any knowledge of the benefits to others hence the need to educate the community at large and to make mandatory, the use of a body for donation except a family especially says "NO".

 SP (QUL)

David G. Mc Veagh

The above submission is to be placed before the Research Director