



# DONOR HEROES' NIGHT

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



**All Australians are urged to be involved in Donor Heroes Night and have that all important family conversation concerning organ and tissue donation.**

## **Media Release #1**

While the Event revolves around celebrating our Donor Heroes, the aim is also to raise organ & tissue donation awareness within the Australian community. Mr Graham Harrison, Donor Families Australia (DFA) Event Coordinator of Donor Heroes' Night, stated that *"as a result of this event, Australians may be more inclined to consider becoming an organ and tissue donor following their passing"*.

The demand for organ and tissue donors is far outstripping availability with 1,800 patients currently on the National organ transplant waiting list with approximately a further 14,000 patients currently on dialysis. Sadly, of the 1,435 families who were asked about donation only 793 said yes. This poor consent rate of 55%, DFA believes, reflects a lack of community education and understanding of the donation and transplantation process.

Australia has experienced an improvement in the donation rate from that experienced during the covid years of a low of 16.35donors/million to that of 19.40donors/million by the end of 2023. However, Australians donation rate remains 60% below that of Spain's which leads the world at 48.9donors/million. While Australia is once again slowly improving from its poor base line in 2009, we should not remain complacent while Australia remains ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in the world.

For Graham, the task of raising awareness about the importance of tissue and organ donation hits close to home. Graham and his wife Elayne agreed to donate the organs of their 10-year-old son Ben in May 1993 after Ben died unexpectedly during surgery. To commemorate the contribution that Ben and tens of thousands of other organ and tissue donors have made to the lives of their recipients, Graham leads a team from Donor Families Australia which runs the annual Donor Heroes' Night event on May 18th each year – the anniversary of his son's passing.

Donor Heroes' Night is a great opportunity for Australians to get behind tissue and organ donation by donor families, recipients and their families and those that support the concept of organ and tissue donation to post their support on Facebook. Last year many hundreds of participants visited [www.facebook.com/DonorFamiliesAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/DonorFamiliesAustralia) to upload a picture of their porch light or candle and add a note of remembrance or gratitude to our Donor Heroes'.

Once again, Donor Families Australia encourage everyone to have that very important conversation with their family members about their wish to donate, take the time to understand the process and be sure to register your intent on the national organ donor registry.

Further information on Donor Heroes' Night and the benefits of organ and tissue donation can be found at: [www.donorfamiliesaustralia.org/donor-heroes-night](http://www.donorfamiliesaustralia.org/donor-heroes-night)

**Associated hashtags:**

#DonorHeroesNight #DonorHeroes #DonorFamilies #leavealighton #forevergrateful

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

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**Graham Harrison** // Event Coordinator & Media Contact // Mobile: 0421 697 048

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STATISTICS Quoted: are obtained from the DonateLife website.

BOILERPLATE: Donor Families Australia is a national member-based independent support and advocacy group comprising families who have donated their loved ones' organs and tissue. It's the only organisation of its kind in Australia specifically dedicated to Donor Families.

<https://www.donorfamiliesaustralia.org/>