

Hello Donor Families Australia (DFA) Members

It has been a while since my last communique. I have been on sick leave for a period but am now back on deck.

The Organ and Tissue Authority (OTA) is holding a Community Forum and you are invited. Click on the link below (attendance can be in person or online) –

<https://keito.eventsair.com/donation-and-transplantation-conference-2025/donateliferegoportal/Site/Register>

It has been years since the OTA held anything similar. It may not be any coincidence that it coincides with the recently announced law reform review where the Attorney General will be doing a state by state consultation process with harmonisation and updating state and territory Human Tissue legislation being the goal. This review was brought about by DFA's exposure of the OTA and Donate Life offices contravening their respective legislations. The OTA recently had its legislation amended but unfortunately with no regard for Donor Families. Still around Australia Families do not own their loved ones information (with exception of SA and the ACT).

Also this year we hope to see a finalised Ethical Review on Organ and Tissue Donation. No single year has seen the OTA and its processes scrutinised in such a way.

This will be an opportunity for everyone to let the public sector and the politicians know what is important to a Donor Family and Recipient.

Just recently the WA government put through legislation whereby Tissue retrieval will now be done by non medically qualified technicians. This legislation was passed without one Donor Family consulted. In the past we have just assumed that our loved ones would be operated on by qualified surgeons. In WA that is no longer the case and one has to question what level of care and respect is provided to our Donor Hero loved one. One has to also question what information reflecting these changes will be passed onto Families before consent is given. Once one state introduces such legislation it will be only a matter of time before the others follow.

You may be wanting to be assisted to meet your consenting Donor Family/Recipient. For years DFA has been requesting for consenting Donor Families and Recipients to be assisted to meet. This may be something that you would like to see happen.

Do you want to see better communication between Donate Life and yourselves? Do you want to be able to use your loved ones first name in a letter? Are you certain that your letter went to whom it was meant?

This forum is an opportunity for you to be able to contribute on the above topics and more. We urge you to come forward and let the organisers of this forum know what is important to you. The larger the numbers the more chance we have for real change.

Hope to see you there.

Bruce McDowell
Chairman