

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-343

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION FOR TRANSPLANTATION

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

How has the process of organ donation changed since the 2008 announcement of A World's Best Practice Approach to Organ and Tissue Donation for Transplantation?

Answer:

The process of organ donation has changed in the following ways since 2008:

- Each state and territory has now employed a State Medical Director to lead the organ and tissue donation sector in each jurisdiction. The leaders caucus with the Authority and one another regularly to drive clinical practice change to increase organ and tissue donation rates;
- The number of organ and tissue donation agencies has increased to eight employing 76 specialist staff in organ and tissue donation coordination, professional education, donor family support, communications and data and audit positions;
- 162 new specialist clinical staff have been employed in 77 hospitals across Australia to facilitate the organ and tissue donation process and to educate and support hospital staff in the organ and tissue donation process;
- Organ donation coordinators and hospital based staff now work closely together to facilitate organ and tissue donation at the hospital level. These teams are accountable for their performance to the State Medical Directors and to the Authority;
- With the sustained increase in organ and tissue donation rates, the frequency with which hospital based staff have been exposed to the organ and tissue donation process has increased, thereby providing more opportunities for more staff to become aware of organ and tissue donation, thus serving to normalise the process as part of end-of-life care;

- Clinical triggers have been implemented in these hospitals to prompt treating staff to refer patients for consideration for organ and tissue donation. This has led to an increase in the identification of potential donors;
- The implementation of the hospital performance audit (DonateLife Audit) potential donor audit has provided, for the first time, national information on request and consent rates in each hospital. This data set enables comparison of hospital performance against comparable peer hospitals and accountability of individual hospitals for performance to both the State Medical Director and the Authority;
- The introduction of organ donation hospital support funding has gone some way to removing barriers to organ donation in hospitals by providing funding towards additional ventilated ICU beds, access to operating theatres and the availability of additional clinical staff to support the organ donation and retrieval processes.