

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-402

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AUTHORITY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Sinodinos asked:

Why has NSW recently released a discussion paper seeking input on ways to improve its organ donation and transplantation system when a national plan was devised (including a detailed implementation plan and budget) back in 2008?

Answer:

While New South Wales is participating fully in the Australian Government's national reform agenda to increase organ and tissue donation for transplantation, the rate of organ donation in New South Wales remains comparatively low.

The reasons New South Wales released a Discussion paper are a matter for the NSW Government. The aim of the Discussion Paper released by the New South Wales Minister for Health, the Hon Jillian Skinner MP, on 6 December 2011, was to seek public comments on further options for increasing organ donation in New South Wales.

Some of the strategies posed in the paper include: cessation of the Road Traffic Authority (RTA) register in favour of promoting the national Australian Organ Donor Register (AODR) as the single national register for donation intentions; and promoting Advanced Care Directives as a secondary mechanism for confirming consent.

Any action by the NSW Government to enhance implementation of elements of the National Reform Agenda will be welcomed, particularly action to decommission the RTA Register which has been identified as a major barrier to donation activity in New South Wales. Evidence from DonateLife New South Wales suggests that objections to donation recorded on the RTA register prevent around 20 per cent of New South Wales donations proceeding and as such it is jeopardising the potential for further growth in organ donations in New South Wales and thus nationally.