

Organ Donations – Lastingpost.com

Introduction

It is becoming increasingly common for people to state in their wills that they wish to leave organs either for transplants or for medical research.

If you wish to donate organs or tissue on death you are advised to join the NHS Organ Donor Register. This records your agreement to the use of your organs and tissue for transplantation after your death.

Carrying a Donor Card is not necessarily sufficient. Donor Cards can get lost or damaged so to ensure your wishes are followed through you should register at www.uk.transplant.org.uk

The law relating to organ donations

You should be aware of the Human Tissue Act 2004 which came into effect in April 2006. This Act governs the law on organ donations and states the ways in which tissue and organs can be donated and used. This is not limited to transplants and also includes research, training and education.

You need to specify your requirements if you wish to limit what may happen to your body after death. It is common for people to leave their body to medical research which is quite different to organ donation.

Some people give consent for their body to be used for organ donation and/or medical research. This gives the medical profession the most leeway.

Code of Practice

This is an intensely personal issue and you should discuss it with your immediate family. Families who have lost a close relative may find it distressing to think that organs are to be or have been transplanted. There is a Code of Practice produced by the Department of Health available on their website www.hta.gov.uk/donations/organdonations.cfm

You can add a clause to your Will stating whether or not you wish to donate your organs for transplant and/or your body for medical research but as a Will is often not read for several days (sometimes weeks) after death, it is advisable to register as a donor for organ transplant especially. You should also make your family aware of your wishes.

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will very much depend on your individual circumstances. You should therefore use the information only as a starting point for your enquiries.

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