

Reflections

The DonateWest Newsletter

Autumn Edition

April 2008



Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week 17 - 24 February 2008

Inside this issue:

2008 Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week	1
2008 Donor Honour Board Ceremony	2
New Zealand Retrieval	2
Don't Waste Your Wish Marketing Campaign	3
Metro Church	3
Circle for Life	3
Meet Dr Kevin Yuen	4
Meet Ms Linda Thomas	4
Register on the AODR	4
Education Sessions	4
Website Update	4

Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week (AODAW) was held recently to encourage all Australians to sign on to the Australian Organ Donor Register and to discuss their wishes on organ and tissue donation with their family and friends.

A media event was held to mark the WA launch of the AODAW outside parliament house. Kidney transplant recipient and Southern River MLA Paul Andrews was joined by parliamentary colleagues who signed on to the Australian Organ Donor Register and urged others to register as organ and tissue donors.

Health Minister Jim McGinty said there were almost 650,000 Western Australians registered but there was always more that could be done.

"Whilst we have 41 per cent of the WA population over 16 years of age registered, we encourage more people to consider signing on and to make family and friends aware of their decision," he said.

In 2007, more than 150 Australians were granted a better chance at life thanks to the 59 Western Australians who generously donated their organs and tissue.

Mr McGinty said that factors such as age, residence overseas or health conditions are not necessarily barriers to organ and tissue donation as each case is assessed individually.

To register call 1800 777 203 or www.medicareaustralia.gov.au, or pick up a pamphlet from your local Medicare Office.



Top R-L: Paul Andrews, Max Trenorden, Terry Redman, Terry Waldron, Grant Woodhams, Graham Jacobs, Wendy Duncan
Bottom R-L: Brendon Grylls, John Quigley, Ben Wyatt.



John Quigley "A+ Organ Donor" tattoo on his ankle

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2008 Donor Honour Board Ceremony

The annual Donor Honour Board Ceremony was held on 13 April 2008 at Lake Monger Reserve, honouring the memory of people who have recently left behind the legacy of life by donating their organs and tissues for transplantation.

DonateWest hosted the ceremony for the families and loved ones of donors from the past years, placing their names on Western Australia's Donor Honour Board as a lasting tribute to their final act of generosity.

DonateWest Medical Director Dr Kevin Yuen welcomed all parties and the Department of Health Chief Medical Officer Dr Simon Towler was the guest presenter. The ceremony was addressed by Rita Robinson, who has experienced both sides of organ donation and transplantation as her son Michael was a corneal donor and her other son Steven was a corneal recipient.

Mark Stiffel, a liver recipient also shared his story of courage and said "Thank you for giving me my life back". The ceremony was concluded by Paul Byrne, Donor Coordinator who announced the newly engraved names.



Rita and Winston Robinson



Mark Stiffel and family



New Zealand Retrieval

Late last year, a team of professionals from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and DonateWest completed a first, by retrieving a liver to transplant from outside of the Perth metropolitan area, namely from a hospital in New Zealand.

A patient was critically ill in Perth requiring an urgent liver transplant and was listed to receive the first available one. New Zealand was the first place to offer a liver, but several organ donations had taken place within a short period that the surgical teams were exhausted and unable to complete the retrieval.

Daniel Winters, the Donor Coordinator on duty at the time said "When an offer is made, normally I would be limited to giving the details of the offer to the Liver Transplant Surgeon at SCGH, and should the liver be suitable, arrange the transport of the liver from Perth Airport to the hospital",

"However, our New Zealand counterparts said they would need us to send a Surgeon, a Surgical Registrar, an Instrument Nurse, and someone to complete the

organ perfusion, as well as much of the equipment and solutions needed so the liver could be retrieved".

As per national protocols, only 20 minutes were available to formally accept the organ. A team was put together urgently, and a commercial flight booked to Melbourne, where the team met a chartered small jet. The jet took the team to New Zealand and then returned them all the way to Perth. The team included Surgeon Mr Bulang He, Surgical Registrar Dr Jeremy Tan, Instrument Nurse Ute Wrede and Donor Coordinator Daniel Winters.

"We left Perth at about 5pm on the Sunday, and landed back at about 3 pm the next day. Needless to say, all four of us slept soundly on the jet on the way back!" declared Daniel.

Daniel said that thanks were due to so many people who helped to realise the wishes of the Donor and the Donor's family in donating organs.

“Don’t Waste Your Wish” Marketing Campaign

The DonateWest “Don’t Waste Your Wish” marketing campaign, aimed at increasing registrations, was launched on 3 February 2008 and ran for 3 weeks, including during the Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week.

The campaign comprised of a new TV Commercial (TVC) that was based on a “make it happen” idea which used scenarios of people making wishes to lead into the importance of someone’s wishes after they die.

The TVC aired on Channels 7 and 9, along with press advertising in the West Australian Newspaper throughout the 3 week period.

How did we do?

Preliminary statics show that the campaign is proving to be a success. We expect the improved figures to continue into March, April, May and June.

- Registrations jumped from an average 880 per month to 1,641 in February
- Inquiry calls have increased from an average of 294 per month to 691 calls in February
- Website hits to dontwasteyourwish.org and DonateWest website have increased from an average 471 visitors a month to 1,839 visitors in February

Metro Church

DonateWest would like to thank Metro Church and its congregation for the 58 people who registered on the Australian Organ Donor Register. Karen Stewart, Director of Life Services at Metro Church had organised a community event which saw March as the organ donation registration month. Thank you to Metro Church and Karen for all your efforts and a fantastic number of registrations.

Ilinka Klimeska (L), Communication Officer DonateWest, accepts registrations from Karen Stewart (R), Director of Life Services, Metro Church



What’s next?

Just recently, the “Don’t Waste Your Wish” TVC was broadcast during the Australian Olympic Swimming Championship Trails (15-22 March 2008), on Channel 9. Also, for the weeks beginning Tuesday 25 March 2008 and Tuesday 08 April 2008 full page colour adverts were placed in all of the 14 Community Newspaper Group WA Editions

Be on the lookout for the “Don’t Waste Your Wish” TVC as there will be a second burst of advertising for the first 3 weeks in May 2008 to coincide with Mother’s Day. This includes broadcasting of the TVC on Channel’s 7 and 9, and press advertising in the West Australian and the Sunday Times.



The “Don’t Waste Your Wish” TVC can be seen by visiting www.dontwasteyourwish.org

Circle for Life

Paul Barratt, the first heart and lung recipient to be transplanted in Western Australia, and creator of the “Circle for life” project arranged an event at Gloucester Park races to promote organ donation and the Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week. A number of people lined the track at Gloucester Park to create a “Circle for Life” (below) to symbolise organ donation and transplantation.

DonateWest would like to thank Paul Barratt and the Circle of Life team for all their hard work on promoting organ and tissue donation.



Picture taken by W. Crabb

Register on the Australian Organ Donor Register



Meet Dr Kevin Yuen DonateWest Medical Director

Dr Yuen joined DonateWest in March 2008. In addition to his role at DonateWest, Dr Yuen works as a Palliative Care consultant looking after patients

with life threatening illnesses at RPH, Kalamunda Palliative Care Unit and in Kalgoorlie. Dr Yuen worked as a GP for many years and enjoyed the variety of work offered as the clinic employed different approaches including acupuncture and meditation.

When not working, Dr Yuen loves playing sport and enjoys spending time with his family.



Meet Ms Linda Thomas DonateWest Donor Coordinator

In July 2007, Linda was selected from the Intensive Care Unit at Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) for a 12 month secondment as a Donor Coordinator, having been the Project Officer for the RPH

National Organ Donation Collaborative (NODC) team. Linda has extensive experience in all areas of critical care nursing, holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Intensive Care Nursing from Edith Cowan University and has completed the International Course for Organ Donor and Transplant Recipient Coordinators.

Linda presented the RPH NODC successes and sustainability strategies as well as the RPH NODC initiatives to promote tissue donation entitled "Don't Forget the Tissues - Education to Improve Tissue Donation" and is a strong advocate for organ and tissue donation.

DonateWest would like to thank Linda for all her hard work over the last 12 months and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavours.

Australian Organ Donor Register

The register provides a simple way for people aged 16 and over to record their wishes on organ and tissue donation. Becoming an organ donor after death is about choice, and the new AODR permits that. It allows intending donors to be specific about which organs and tissues they wish to donate and

You can register on free call 1800 777 203, log onto www.medicareaustralia.gov.au or pick up a pamphlet from your local Medicare Office and remember to discuss your wishes with your family.

Education Sessions

DonateWest offers education sessions on organ and tissue donation to the public and healthcare sector. We provide presentations that range from 15 minutes up to an hour, which cover the:

- importance of organ & tissue donation
- organs & tissues that can be donated
- the process of donation
- dispelling some of the myths
- how to register on the AODR

If you would like to arrange a presentation for your staff, students or local group please email donatewest@health.wa.gov.au or call us on 9222 0222.

Website Update

The DonateWest Website has had a recent "make over" with revised content and a new look. It is easy to navigate and it's a one-stop-shop on organ and tissue donation information. The "Don't Waste Your Wish" TVC can also be viewed at our website www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au

For further information on Organ and Tissue donation please contact DonateWest on (08) 9222 0222 or donatewest@health.wa.gov.au or visit our website www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au