

# Reflections

## The DonateWest Newsletter

Autumn Edition

April 2009



Department of  
Health

## DonateWest Honours Organ and Tissue Donors

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**The 2009 Donor Honour Board Ceremony was held on Sunday, 5th April 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 friends of donors from the past year, placing 68 names on *Western Australia's Donor Honour Board* as a lasting tribute to their final act of generosity.

Mr Andrew Mitchell, a Transplant Surgeon from the WA Liver and Kidney Unit at SCGH, welcomed all parties and shared his experiences with transplantation.

Health Minister, Dr Kim Hames MLA, was the guest presenter. Dr Hames said there were 28 organ and 41 tissue donors from Western Australia in 2008. "The generosity

of the 28 organ donors and their families resulted in 95 people across Australia receiving transplants and having a second chance at life," he said.

The ceremony was also addressed by Maxine Hamersley, the mother of multiple organ donor, 24 year old Robert, who died in a car accident. "Because he was such a big, healthy boy I wanted to donate his organs," she said.

Angela Davey, a 27 year old double lung recipient, also shared her story of courage and said, "Life these days does feel pretty amazing".

The ceremony was concluded by Denyse Norman, Donor Coordinator, who announced the newly engraved names on the honour board.



2009 Donor Honour Board Ceremony.



Left to right: Dr Kim Hames MLA, Maxine Hamersley and Angela Davey.

Above photos taken by Ron Olsen.

**DonateWest**  
Western Australian  
Agency for Organ and Tissue Donation

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# Meet Ms Micy Lewis – Seconded Donor Coordinator

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**In July 2008, Micy Lewis commenced her 12 month secondment as a Donor Coordinator at DonateWest.**

Micy was a Clinical Nurse in the ICU at Royal Perth Hospital. She has completed a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Murdoch University and several courses in counselling and bereavement. In May 2008, she completed the International Course for Organ Donor and Transplant Recipient Coordinators in Adelaide, SA.

Her particular interest is in education and she has presented at several of the metropolitan public and private hospitals during the last 12 months. Micy also attended the 2009 Cyril Jackson Senior High School Health Expo as the DonateWest delegate.

The last 12 months have been a huge learning curve for Micy and she feels she has improved her communication skills with bereaved families and increased her knowledge in all aspects of organ and tissue donation.

Micy loves to scuba dive and spend time on the beach with her dogs and her husband. With her return to ICU she is looking forward to being able to spend more time doing both.

DonateWest would like to thank Micy for all her work over the last 12 months and wish her the best of luck in her return to the clinical setting.



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## National Authority

**In 2008, the Rudd Government allocated \$151 million over four years to boost organ donation and transplant rates across Australia.**

As a result, the *Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority* was established on 1st January 2009. The Authority has started to work with states and territories, clinicians, consumers and the community sector to build a world-leading organ and tissue donation and transplantation system for Australia.

2009/10 will be a landmark year due to the injection of additional resources into the organ and tissue donation sector. We will keep you up-to-date on all developments.

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## BHP Billiton Nickel West

**DonateWest would like to recognise the efforts of the Nickel West – Kwinana Nickel Refinery for organising an “organ donor drive” during the awareness week.**

Amongst raising awareness about organ and tissue donation throughout the organisation, 30 employees registered their wishes on the Australian Organ Donor Register, which is a fantastic result.

Thank you to Jim Crosby and Lorna Petchell for organising the promotion and to all the employees at Nickel West who support organ and tissue donation.

# Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week 2009

## Western Australians are urged to discuss their wishes about organ and tissue donation with their family and friends following the Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week.

The Annual Awareness Week was held nationally from 21st to 28th February. DonateWest Medical Director, Dr Kevin Yuen said, "The way to ensure that your wishes are honoured is to discuss your wishes with your family and sign on to the Australian Organ Donor Register". There are already over 670,000 Western Australians registered.

In 2008, 846 people across Australia were given another chance at life thanks to the 259 Australians who generously donated their organs.

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

Amongst mass pamphlet distribution to WA Health staff, GPs, metro schools and universities, DonateWest also assisted in hospital displays at Royal Perth, Sir Charles Gairdner and Fremantle Hospitals for the duration of the week to a great reception. We appreciate all the time and effort the staff and volunteers at each of the hospitals contributed towards the Awareness Week.

To register to be an organ and tissue donor call 1800 777 203 or visit [www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au)



*Left to right: Michael Stuart (ICU Outreach Clinical Nurse Consultant); Margaret Martin (Transplant Australia); Jane Dunbar and Ilinka Klimeska (DonateWest); Adam Coleman (Critical Care Nursing Director); Sarah Kelley (Project Officer NODC).*

*Left to right: Sarah Kelley (Fremantle Hospital); Jane Dunbar (DonateWest); George Hobson (Transplant Australia); Kim Ball (Heart and Lung Foundation).*



## Register on the Australian Organ Donor Register

**The Australian Organ Donor Register (AODR) is the way to register your consent to be an organ and tissue donor in Australia.**

The registration process changed from the driver's licence system to the AODR in 2002. 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 to donate and people can even state on the AODR that they do not wish to be a donor at all.

Other advantages of the AODR include security of information and the benefit of a national system. Only a few people have access to the information on the AODR. In Western Australia, no hospital personnel have access to your registration status. Only the Donor Coordinators will access registration details after your death.

More importantly, discuss your wishes with your family. The next of kin is consulted about a person's wishes after death and at such a terrible time, it is much easier for families to make decisions if they are sure of their loved one's wishes.

For those Western Australians who were registered through their driver's licence, your details should have been transferred onto the AODR.

To register or to confirm your registration:

- visit your local Medicare Office
- phone 1800 777 203 (free call)
- or visit [www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au)

### Education Sessions

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

- importance of organ and tissue donation
- organs and 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 call us on (08) 9222 0222 or email [donatewest@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:donatewest@health.wa.gov.au)

### Current Statistics

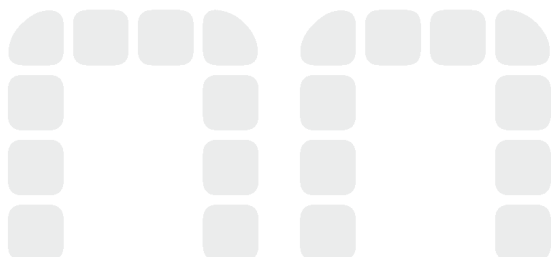
The AODR provides a simple way to record your wishes on organ and tissue donation.

As at 30th April 2009, Western Australia has 671,661 people registered, which is 42% of the population aged over 16 years.

The Western Australia organ and tissue donation rate has increased throughout the last few years:

- 69 donors in 2008
- 59 donors in 2007
- 64 donors in 2006.

Organs that can be donated for transplantation are heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and pancreas; and tissues include corneas, bones and heart valves.



**For further information on organ and tissue donation please contact DonateWest on (08) 9222 0222 or [donatewest@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:donatewest@health.wa.gov.au) or visit our website [www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.donatewest.health.wa.gov.au)**