

# Organ and tissue donation opt-in and opt-out consent systems

## What's the difference?

### Australia's 'opt-in' consent system



Australia has an 'opt-in' system where consent is needed before donation can happen.



People can register to be a donor on the Australian Organ Donor Register.



Families will be asked to agree to donation when their family member dies.

### The 'opt-out' consent system



Some countries have an 'opt-out' system where the law considers all adults to be donors.



If a person does not want to be a donor they need to communicate this, usually on a register.



In most countries with an opt-out system, donation will still not happen if the family objects.

**In both systems** family consent is required before organ and tissue donation can proceed.



**In both systems** the priority of doctors and nurses is to care for patients and support their families as they come to terms with the death of their loved one and make a choice about organ and tissue donation.



**Families are involved in both systems** to provide information about their loved one's health before they died. This will help determine transplant suitability.

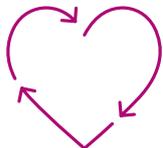
## What is important?

Some people believe that changing to an opt-out system means there will be more donors in Australia. However changing the legal consent system will not increase the number of people who die in a way that allows them to become a donor.

**Only 1300 people (or 2% of those who die in hospital) will be able to become organ donors each year.**

If you are unable to donate your organs, you may still be able to transform the lives of others through eye and tissue donation.

## There are a number of factors that help increase donation, including:



### Having donation specialist staff to support families in hospital

It is important that well-trained donation specialist nurses and doctors talk with families about donation in a sensitive and caring way. They can help families make an informed decision that is right for them and their family member.



### Knowing what a family member wanted to happen when they die

An opt-in system means people choose to be registered donors. This means families know their loved one wanted to be a donor and helps them make decisions in an emotional and stressful time.



Many families say no to donation because they don't know what their family member wanted. Registering leaves no doubt.

After registering it is important for families to talk about donation to be sure of what each other wants to happen when they die.

**Registering as a donor can help save or transform the lives of those who need a transplant.**

To register as an organ and tissue donor visit [www.donatelife.gov.au](http://www.donatelife.gov.au)  
It takes less than a minute.