



Australian Government
**Australian Organ and Tissue Donation
and Transplantation Authority**



Corporate Plan 2024–25



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Organ and Tissue Authority acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to their Elders past and present.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.


Artwork by Aunty Kylie



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Introduction

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



As the Accountable Authority of the Organ and Tissue Authority (OTA), it is my pleasure to present the OTA's Corporate Plan 2024–25, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and*

Accountability Act 2013 (the PGPA Act). This plan is informed by the OTA's Strategy 2022–2027 and covers the 4-year period of 2024–25 to 2027–28.

The OTA is a statutory authority established in 2009 by the *Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Act 2008* and is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity under the PGPA Act. The OTA operates within the Health and Aged Care portfolio and reports to the Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care and Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health.

Our purpose is to save and improve the lives of more Australians through organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Collaboration continues to be integral to achieving our purpose. Working in partnership with our key stakeholders, we are well placed to continue to increase donation and transplantation activity as seen in recent years. To achieve this, we will continue to prioritise building support across the community, optimising opportunities in the clinical sector, and enhancing systems to enable quality outcomes.

I encourage all Australians to talk about donation with their family and, for those who are 16 years and over, to register to be an organ and tissue donor. It only takes one minute at donatelifegov.au or on your medicare app.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lucinda Barry".

Lucinda Barry AM
Chief Executive Officer
22 August 2024

We thank all the generous donors, and their families, who have transformed the lives of people needing a transplant through organ and tissue donation.










We also acknowledge the dedication and commitment of donation specialist staff and transplantation teams. Transplantation is only possible through the donation of organs and tissues, and its life-changing benefits would not be possible without this shared commitment.

Purpose

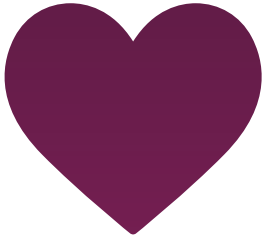
To save and improve the lives of more Australians through organ and tissue donation and transplantation

Goals and objectives

The OTA, on behalf of the Australian Government, leads the national DonateLife program to increase organ and tissue donation and transplantation in partnership with the DonateLife Network, state and territory governments, organ donation and transplantation clinical sectors, eye and tissue sectors, and the community.

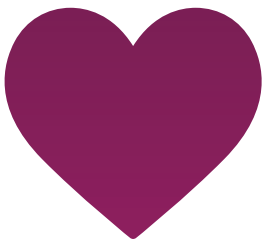
Build support More people say yes to donation	Optimise opportunities Donation and transplantation services deliver the best outcomes	Enhance systems Enable quality outcomes through information, technology and resources
 Raise awareness	 Identify donors & increase consent	 Monitor, collect, analyse & report national performance
 Increase family discussion	 Drive excellence in donation services	 Advance quality, safety & efficiency
 Increase registration	 Increase safe & equitable transplantation	 Sustain specialist resources

Values and behaviours



Commitment

We are passionate about who we are, our work and our future



Collaboration

We work together to achieve shared goals



Excellence

We strive for the best quality national outcomes



Integrity

We operate with trust, respect, honesty and compassion



Innovation

We keep an open mind and have courage to make improvements

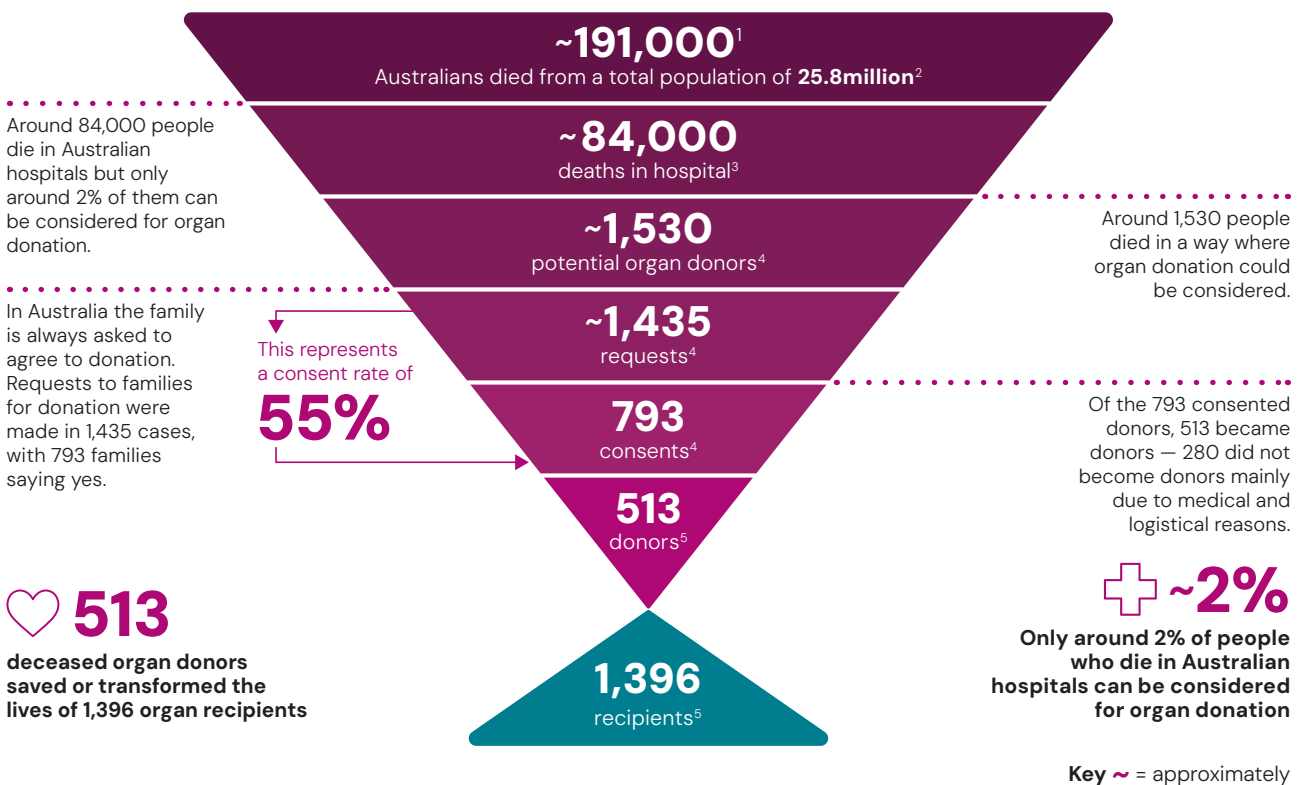
Environment

How donation works in Australia

Very few people can become an organ donor when they die. A person must die in a hospital in specific circumstances, in an intensive care unit or emergency department, as organs need to be functioning well to be considered for transplantation. Only around 2% of people who die in Australian hospitals meet the criteria required to be an organ donor.

For someone who is seriously ill, an organ or tissue transplant can mean the difference between life and death, being healthy or sick, seeing or being blind, or being active and never walking again. Transplantation enables people to resume an active role in their family, workplace and community.

Figure 1: Australia's potential deceased organ donor population and transplantation outcomes 2023



Sources

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of death, Australia, 2022 (Released 27/09/2023)
- 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics. National, state and territory population, 30 June 2023 (Released 14/12/2023)
- 3 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2021. Admitted patient care 2020-21 (Released 31/05/2023)
- 4 DonateLife Audit, February 2024
- 5 Deceased organ donation in Australia, Australia and New Zealand Organ Donation Registry, January 2024

The DonateLife program

Currently there are around 1,800 Australians on the organ transplant waitlist and a further 14,000 people on dialysis, many of whom could benefit from a kidney transplant. With the rising prevalence of chronic disease and advancements in medical technology, transplantation is the optimal and sometimes only treatment option for people with organ failure.

Evidence demonstrates that a coordinated and consistent national approach across the hospital system and clinical practice, with sustained public awareness, leads to improvements in donation and transplantation rates. The foundations of the DonateLife program to increase organ and tissue donation and transplantation have been developed with reference to international best practices and adapted for the Australian environment.

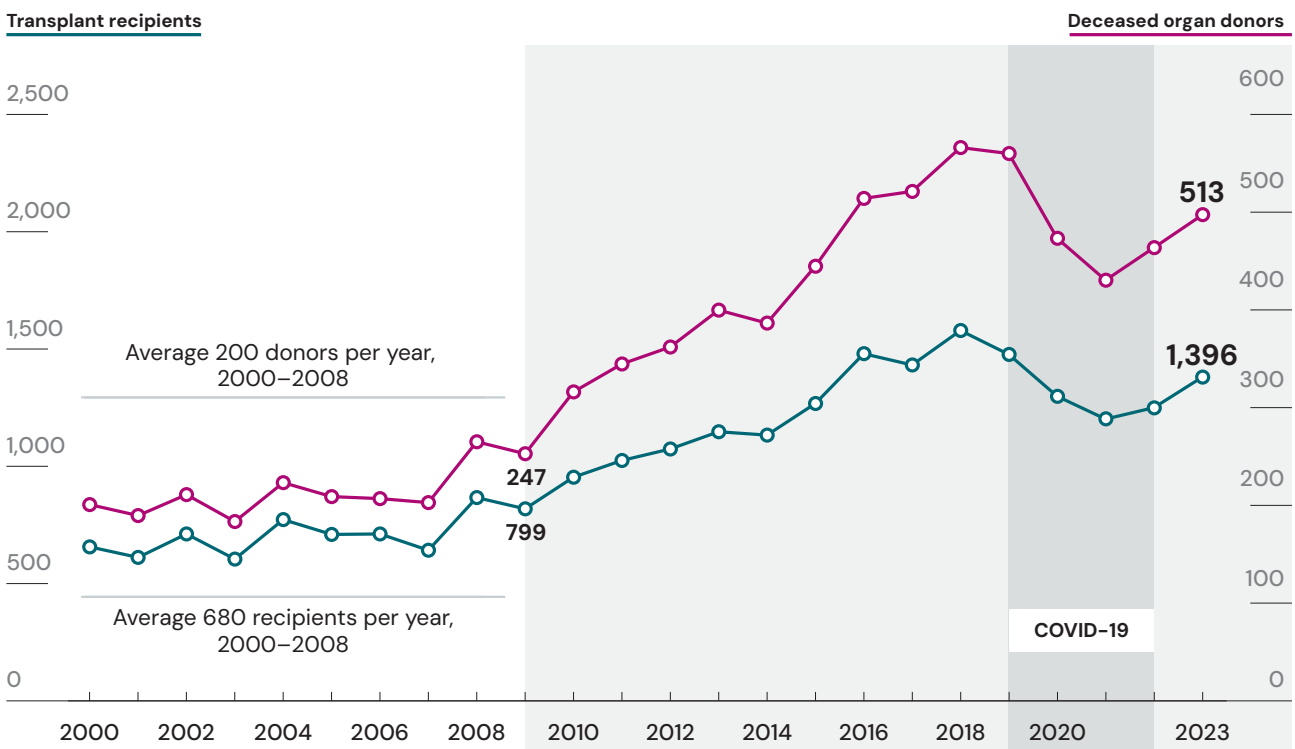
Australia has an ‘opt-in’ donation consent system. People can register to be a donor on the Australian

Organ Donor Register. Family agreement is sought when donation is possible, so it is important that people also let those closest to them know if they want to be a donor.

Collaboration continues to be integral to increasing donation and transplantation in Australia. Navigating pressures on the health system, workforce and community is an ongoing process and we continue to work collaboratively with the DonateLife Network, the transplant sector, the eye and tissue sector, hospitals and the community to implement the DonateLife program for organ and tissue donation.

The first 10 years (2009–2019) of the DonateLife program saw a 122% increase in deceased donation, resulting in an 81% increase in people receiving an organ transplant. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted deceased organ donation rates. However, since 2022 there has been continued recovery in the sector.

Figure 2: Deceased organ donation and transplant recipients 2000–2023



Note: the Donatelife program commenced in 2009

Emerging technologies and innovation

The DonateLife program has been developed to prioritise continuous improvement with reference to international best practices. We are continuing to drive innovation in data collection and analysis as our datasets are critical to informing program design and driving clinical best practice outcomes.

The OTA will continue to monitor the international landscape for emerging approaches to consent systems, registration and clinical practice, including efforts to expand the pool of potential donors. We will continue to stay abreast of new technologies and support collaboration with the sector to help close the gap between the number of organs suitable for transplant and the number of people requiring a transplant. An example of this is the use of machine perfusion technology to maintain and enhance the quality of organs, improve organ preservation and enable an increase in organ utilisation.

Legislation

The legislative environment for donation and transplantation remains complex and challenging.

Each Australian jurisdiction continues to regulate human organ and tissue donation and transplantation through its own human tissue legislation, including provisions around the disclosure of information to maintain the privacy of organ and tissue donors and transplant recipients. The OTA welcomes the recent announcement to establish an Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry to harmonise human tissue laws.

In February 2024, amendments to the *Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Act 2008* came into effect. The changes enable the OTA to disseminate, publish or disclose information about deceased donors in public awareness, promotional or educational activities and commemorative services, with consent from an authorised family member. The definition of an authorised family member was also broadened with the amendments, in line with the make-up of families today. Supporting more donor families to share their story helps to raise awareness and encourage family discussion about organ and tissue donation.

Recently a number of states and territories have passed legislation to enable voluntary assisted dying (VAD). Patients who choose VAD may be able to participate in organ donation after circulatory determination of death, giving the gift of life to others. Australia has become the fifth country in the world to facilitate organ donation after VAD. As of June 2024, this change has resulted in 6 people donating their organs in Australia.

National reviews

Together the OTA, the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and state and territory governments will finalise and implement the National Strategy for Organ Donation, Retrieval and Transplantation, and with the sector continue to implement the [National Eye and Tissue Sector Framework](#). The delivery on agreed priorities across the sectors will build on the successes and learnings of the DonateLife program and will complement the [OTA's Strategy 2022–2027](#).

Equity of access for all Australians

Equitable access for all Australians who would benefit from organ transplantation remains an area of focus. We will continue to focus on opportunities to raise awareness, knowledge and support for donation and work with the community, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, clinical sectors and First Nations peoples to improve outcomes.

We are committed to redressing structural and systemic inequities and working with states and territories to enable the delivery of culturally safe donation services across the DonateLife Network.

We continue to explore opportunities to increase safe and equitable transplantation through enhancements to Australia's best practice organ-matching system, OrganMatch.

OrganMatch went live in 2019 and continues to improve matching capabilities between kidney donors and people on the waitlist, helping patients who are highly sensitised — and hard to match for medical reasons — as well as young recipients and people who urgently need a transplant.

Increasing consent

With only a small number of potential donors, increasing family consent in the hospital is critical to increasing our donation rate. Consent is influenced by many factors, so we continue to focus on opportunities to further understand community perceptions of, and decisions around, organ donation. Reaching our national consent rate target of 70% would make Australia a world leader in donation rates and, critically, would give around 300 more people each year access to an organ transplant.

Increasing registration and family discussion

Registrations on the Australian Organ Donor Register remain at 36%, or around 7.7 million people, even though 4 in 5 Australians say they support organ donation. Behavioural research commissioned by the OTA in 2023 shows there are many reasons why people haven't registered to be a donor. Most commonly people report that they don't like to think about dying, that they don't know enough about the process and its implications, or that they have never really thought about it. There are also many Australians who think they have registered to be an organ and tissue donor but who are not on the national register.

Registration has a direct impact on consent rates in the hospital and on donation and transplantation activity. We continue to focus on increasing new registrations and encouraging family conversations about organ donation.

We are aiming for 50% of all eligible Australians to register as organ donors and to achieve this we will need an extra 7 million registrations on the Australian Organ Donor Register. To reach this goal we need large-scale registration channels, which we will continue to investigate with governments.

Sociocultural attitudes to donation

Behavioural research shows organ donation is poorly understood by around 50% of Australians, and tissue donation is even less understood (28%). There are many misunderstandings and myths around eligibility criteria, the organ donation process and what organs can be donated.

Australia is also a diverse and multicultural country. With 1 in 3 Australians born overseas and 1 in 5 Australians also speaking a language other than English at home, communicating about organ and tissue donation to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in a culturally safe way is important to increasing organ and tissue donation.

We want all Australians to talk about organ and tissue donation, to tell their family that they want to be a donor and, importantly, to register. We are committed to identifying opportunities and unlocking behavioural change to raise awareness about the importance of registration and family discussions. We implement strategies at both national and grassroots levels. We will continue to expand the reach of our existing community awareness and education activities by targeting Australians from CALD backgrounds so that more people can receive a life-saving transplant.

Registration report card



36%

In 2023 36% of eligible Australians were registered on the Australian Organ Donor Register



7 million

To reach our goal of 50%, an extra 7 million registrations are needed

Cooperation

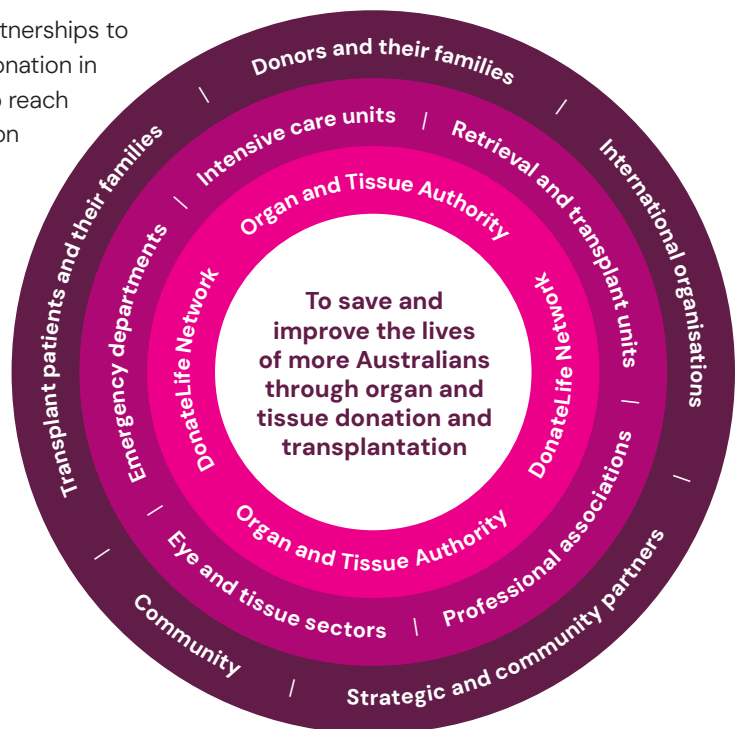
Collaboration is integral to increasing donation and transplantation rates in Australia.

The OTA provides leadership to drive, implement and monitor a national approach in partnership with the DonateLife Network. The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, state and territory governments, the broader organ donation and transplantation clinical sectors, the eye and tissue sectors, and community organisations provide advice through our advisory committees to inform and support the delivery of the Donatelife program.

The OTA has a range of strategic and community partnerships to increase public awareness about organ and tissue donation in Australia. This includes partnerships supporting us to reach target audience groups that are under-represented on the Australian Organ Donor Register:

- people aged 16 to 30
- First Nations peoples
- culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

Figure 3: Collaboration environment



The DonateLife Network

The Australian Government, through the OTA, provides funding to state and territory governments to deliver donation services consistent with the Donatelife program.

Each state and territory has a DonateLife agency, a leadership team, and hospital-based medical and nursing donation specialist staff. Agency staff also include educators, communication officers, donor family support officers, and data and audit personnel. These teams are referred to as the Donatelife Network.

The DonateLife Network includes



8

DonateLife agencies across Australia



260+

donation specialist staff across Australia



~95

hospitals

Capability

The OTA relies on key capabilities to achieve our purpose and support the government's priorities, ensuring that we can respond flexibly to the challenges, risks and opportunities in our environment.

Analytics and technology



People and culture



Communication and stakeholder engagement



Clinical expertise



Analytics and technology

We harness our expertise, data and technology assets to provide national insights and improve donation and transplantation outcomes across Australia.

We aim to:

- have technologies in place to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively
- safeguard the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information and data through robust governance processes
- provide high-quality data to inform decision-making and drive improvement in organ and tissue donation outcomes and clinical practice
- enhance the efficiency, accountability and transparency of the donation organ allocation and offer process
- monitor and uplift our cybersecurity maturity in line with the Protective Security Policy Framework.

We will enhance our capability by:

- further investing in key applications that inform and enable the donation, retrieval and transplantation process, including the Electronic Donor Record, DonateLife Audit and OrganMatch (Australia's national organ-matching system)
- growing our technical expertise, including our data extraction, integration and analysis skills, through improvements in skill sharing and expanded collaboration in analysis and problem solving
- building understanding of the donation and transplantation sectors and organ donation process by working closely with the DonateLife Network, the clinical sector and our partners
- engaging with partners to improve our technology infrastructure and enhance our cybersecurity posture
- improving governance processes in line with legislation, such as the *Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022*, and changes in clinical and data best practices.

People and culture

We are committed to building a positive culture and harnessing our diverse skills, experience and qualities to achieve our purpose.

We aim to:

- continue to foster a culture which is inclusive, psychologically safe and positive and which minimises psychosocial risks
- uphold and champion integrity every day
- build our cultural literacy, diversity and inclusion practices so that our employees belong and thrive
- maintain a healthy working environment that supports employees to choose a sustainable pace
- support employee agency by enabling autonomy and building employee capabilities
- encourage innovation and a workplace culture that promotes open discussion of risk and exploration of new ideas, empowering employees to act and to learn from their mistakes.

We will enhance our capability by:

- engaging in proactive workforce planning which will enable us to attract and retain the right people, support a positive workplace culture and tackle immediate and emerging challenges
- improving the workplace experience by listening to our employees through the Australian Public Service (APS) Census survey and providing an action plan to address the results
- building cultural competency to acknowledge, celebrate and learn more about the significance of First Nations peoples, communities, histories and cultures, including through implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan and providing mandatory cultural competency training across our workforce
- implementing actions from the APS reform agenda, including bolstering integrity, outwardly engaging and strengthening the capability of our staff.



In line with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, we will continue to review how we deliver the core work of the OTA, including how our existing functions and roles are resourced.

The OTA uses contractors, labour hire and consultants in very limited circumstances. In 2024–25 the OTA is not expecting a reduction in outsourcing expenditure.



Communication and stakeholder engagement

We apply evidence-based communication and engagement methods, in collaboration with the DonateLife Network and stakeholders, to build support for organ and tissue donation — encouraging Australians to register and talk to their family about donation.

We aim to:

- lead a nationally consistent team of professional communication experts across Australia, in collaboration with the DonateLife Network
- partner with a range of local and national stakeholders, media, community groups, professional organisations and governments to extend the reach of public awareness messages and activities into target audience segments
- use data, insights and research to deliver targeted communication and engagement activities that increase DonateLife brand awareness, and identify key opportunities for behavioural change to increase the number of new registrations on the Australian Organ Donor Register and prompt family discussion about donation
- make our communication accessible to all
- be culturally appropriate and inclusive in our engagement and communication.

We will enhance our capability by:

- implementing communication and engagement strategies to deliver nationally focused and consistent activities to increase awareness, drive new registrations on the Australian Organ Donor Register and increase family discussion
- using audience segmentation and research findings about attitudes and behaviour to build support for organ and tissue donation
- strengthening the DonateLife digital presence, using data and insights about audience behaviour to optimise digital content and channels for target audience groups such as First Nations peoples, young people and culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- actively collaborating with a range of stakeholders, advocates and partners to increase public awareness about organ and tissue donation in Australia.

Clinical expertise

We bring together clinical expertise from across the DonateLife Network and the clinical sector to drive nationally consistent best clinical practices that deliver the best outcomes, so that more people have access to life-changing transplantation.

We aim to:

- drive nationally consistent best clinical practices and efficiencies in donation and transplantation
- lead the development of clinical guidelines and standards to drive a safe, efficient and effective system
- lead the DonateLife program based on international clinical best practice
- maintain vigilance and surveillance to enhance safety across the organ donation and transplantation sectors
- support and listen to families who make the decision to donate
- deliver a high-quality clinical organ donation education and training program.

We will enhance our capability by:

- guiding and participating in expert committees and working groups to draw on specialist skills and capabilities within the DonateLife Network and among sector partners
- implementing the OTA's National Education Program, which further develops the skill set of DonateLife donation specialists and clinicians, who play a critical role in caring for the donor, managing the process, engaging with families, and providing care in the hospital
- continuing to review the Australian Donor Risk Assessment Interview so information on donors is relevant and useful to the transplantation sector
- collecting data on donor family experience to understand how families experience donation and how we can improve the donation process
- engaging with hospitals to cultivate relationships, grow best practice and further improve organ donation performance outcomes
- working with the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and state and territory governments to finalise and implement the National Strategy for Organ Donation, Retrieval and Transplantation and, with the sector, implement the [National Eye and Tissue Sector Framework](#)
- undertaking further enhancements to our national vigilance and surveillance system to further develop the efficacy and safety of the Australian donation and transplantation system
- driving further enhancements to the OrganMatch system to increase safe and equitable transplantation.

Risk oversight and management

The OTA's CEO, as the Accountable Authority, is responsible for risk oversight and management.

The OTA has an appropriate system of risk oversight, management and internal control consistent with section 16 of the PGPA Act, the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and *AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – principles and guidelines*.

Our risk management practices are also informed by internal assurance activities that assess the effectiveness of our current controls and whether further measures are necessary. The OTA's Audit and Risk Committee, established in compliance with section 45 of the PGPA Act, also reviews and advises on the appropriateness of our audit and risk frameworks.

We recognise that effective risk management is a critical component of sound corporate governance, particularly in relation to the delivery of outcomes, transparency and accountability to the portfolio ministers and the parliament.

Desired risk culture

Our risk culture is a shared set of values, attitudes and behaviours that shape how staff engage with risk in the activities they complete at work. Our risk culture needs to be championed by all staff and managers, every day.

The OTA strives to have a positive and effective risk culture – an environment that supports open discussion about uncertainties and opportunities, enables evidence-based decision-making every day, encourages staff to speak up, and provides a channel for the escalation of concerns where necessary.

The OTA regularly reviews its risk management practices and behaviours to enable a supportive and collaborative workplace culture that promotes open and regular discussion of risk, encourages staff to explore new ideas, and empowers everyone to act and to learn from every decision.

Our risk culture in practice includes:

- proactively identifying and managing risks
- using available risk training resources and tools
- adopting a reflective and lessons-learned attitude to risk
- having open and honest conversations about risk
- clearly identifying risk responsibilities, decision-making roles and escalation procedures
- working closely with our partners and stakeholders to understand our shared risks
- ensuring leaders at all levels model our desired risk culture.

Risk appetite and tolerance

We face a range of risks reflecting the diversity of activities we undertake to fulfill our purpose – to save and improve the lives of more Australians through organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Our risk appetite statement: The OTA engages with higher levels of risk, particularly for innovation to achieve community and clinical outcomes. However, the OTA does not want to engage with risks that could harm our people, the DonateLife Network or the community.

We only tolerate risks that:





- achieve our stated objectives efficiently and effectively
- comply with all applicable laws and regulations
- conduct our business in a safe and sound manner

Our tolerance for risk is highly dependent on the activity undertaken and the views of our partners and stakeholders.

We have identified 4 core areas of enterprise-level risks that may impact our ability to achieve our purpose.

Enterprise risks

Table 1: Enterprise risks, management strategies and tolerance

Risk statement	Management strategies	Tolerance level and statement
People 		
Failure to attract, engage and retain high-quality, committed people leads to insufficient capability to deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a flexible workplace culture that invests in staff wellbeing and life-long learning • Actively and regularly engage with staff through staff surveys and employee consultation – taking action as required • Leverage our workforce strategy, to enable the right capability to be attracted and retained into the future 	We have a low tolerance for any activities that may cause harm to the safety and wellbeing of our people. We have a high tolerance for taking a flexible approach to recruiting and retaining an engaged, diverse and skilled workforce.
Engagement 		
Ineffective collaboration with a range of stakeholders, advocates and partners means that we do not build public support for donation and we fail to increase donation rates so that more people can receive a transplant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design communications and engagement initiatives using data, insights and research to maximise awareness opportunities, specific to audience needs • Maintain formal governance structures to collaborate and seek expertise from a range of stakeholders and partners • Build and maintain key relationships through consultation, sharing knowledge and developing solutions with a focus on shared outcomes 	We have a high tolerance for engaging with our stakeholders and partners to build support for donation, optimise opportunities in the clinical sector and enhance systems to enable quality outcomes.
Delivery 		
Failure to optimise opportunities with the clinical sector or improve quality outcomes leads to decreased or less effective donation and transplantation outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain formal governance structures to collaborate and seek expertise • Work with key stakeholders to ensure the most appropriate and effective processes, systems and resources to deliver services • Build and maintain key relationships through consultation, sharing knowledge and developing solutions with a focus on shared outcomes • Use evidence, standards, evolving technology and techniques to drive clinical innovation • Increase capability and capacity in organ donation and transplantation 	We have a low tolerance for any activities that may cause harm to the safety of the community. We have a high tolerance for optimising opportunities with the clinical sector to improve the quality of donation and transplantation outcomes.
Information and technology 		
Inadequate information and technology systems and infrastructure leads to interruption of critical services and or loss of key data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with trusted suppliers to enable information and technology to be available, secure and well maintained and enhance our cybersecurity posture • Ensure adequate business continuity processes are in place to respond to disaster events • Improve governance processes in line with new legislation and changes in clinical and data best practices 	We have a low tolerance for inappropriate, illegal or fraudulent access to systems, which might result in the exposure of personal data and critical information. We have a high tolerance for innovative information technology and consistent practices for lawful sharing of data and information.

Performance

Our Strategy 2022–2027 clearly articulates our goals and objectives. Our strategic planning processes are undertaken in consultation with our key stakeholders and informed by insights from our advisory committees with clinical expertise and from lived experience of donor families and recipients.

The OTA’s annual planning and performance reporting cycle enables us to be transparent and accountable to our stakeholders and the Australian public. We continue to deliver on our performance assurance responsibilities, meeting the requirements of the Commonwealth Performance Framework and accurately reporting on our key objectives and activities that will contribute towards achieving our purpose.

Our performance is reported annually in the OTA’s Annual Performance Statements contained in the

OTA’s Annual Report. Overall results of the DonateLife program are reported annually in the Australian Donation and Transplantation Activity Report.

Performance measures are reported by calendar year to align with Australian and international donation and performance reporting practice.

As documented in the Health and Aged Care Portfolio Budget Statements, the OTA is responsible for:

- **Outcome 1:** Improved access to organ and tissue transplants, including through a nationally coordinated and consistent approach and system
- **Program 1.1:** A nationally coordinated system for organ and tissue donation for transplantation.

Figure 4: Planning and performance reporting framework

Planning	Performance reporting
Strategy	Australian Donation and Transplantation Activity Report
Portfolio Budget Statements	Annual Report (Annual Performance Statements)
Corporate Plan	
Operational Plans	Operational Reporting
Individual Development Plans	Individual Performance Reviews

Program performance

Table 2: Program — performance measures

Measure		Current	2024	2025	2026	2027
Increase the donation rate	Deceased organ donors per million population (dpmp) ^{1,2}	19.3 dpmp	19.8 dpmp	21.5 dpmp	23.3 dpmp	25 dpmp
	Estimated donors per year	513	520	575	625	680
	Living organ donors per million population (dpmp) ^{1,2}	9.5 dpmp	9.7 dpmp	11.1 dpmp	12.5 dpmp	14 dpmp
	Estimated living donors per year	253	255	300	340	380
Increase the transplantation rate	Transplants per year, from deceased and living donors ^{1,2,3}	1,649	1,590	1,730	1,865	2,000

Sources

- 1 Australia and New Zealand Organ Donation Registry
- 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, National, State and Territory Population
- 3 Australia and New Zealand Dialysis and Transplant Registry

Build support

More people say yes to donation

Sustained community support for donation is crucial to improving donation outcomes in Australia. Donation is only possible through the generosity of individuals and their families who say yes to donation, to save and transform the lives of others.



Raise awareness

Objective

More Australians understand the need for organ and tissue donation and the benefits it gives to another person needing a transplant.

Why it's important

Access to life-changing and often life-saving transplantation depends on the willingness of people to donate and public awareness and confidence in the donation process.

40%

of families say yes to donation if they are not aware of what their family member wanted



Increase family discussion

Objective

More Australians talk to their family about organ and tissue donation.

Why it's important

In Australia, families are always asked to agree to donation. It is important registered donors have discussed their donation wishes with their family.

60%

of families say yes to donation when they know what their family member wanted



Increase registration

Objective

All Australians who want to be an organ and tissue donor register on the Australian Organ Donor Register.

Why it's important

Around 4 in 5 Australians aged 16 and over support organ and tissue donation but only 1 in 3 have registered to be a donor. Being a registered donor has a direct impact on families agreeing to donation.

80%

of families say yes to donation if their family member is registered

Table 3: Build support — key activities

Key activities	'24–25	'25–26	'26–27	'27–28
Use behavioural insights, research and data to deliver 'always on' nationally coordinated public relations and digital activities, to raise awareness, encourage family discussion about organ and tissue donation and promote registration	●	●	●	●
Deliver localised community education and awareness initiatives and events to promote donor registration and family discussion and address common barriers and myths about donation	●	●	●	●
Explore additional large-scale registration initiatives to significantly increase the number of people on the Australian Organ Donor Register	●	●	●	●
Work with a range of national and community partners, including through grants, to raise awareness about organ and tissue donation and expand our reach into key target audience groups	●	●	●	●
Acknowledge donors and their families for their generous gift of donation	●	●	●	●
Continue to enhance the user experience of digital channels, including registration channels	●	●	●	●
Deliver culturally appropriate initiatives and resources for target audience groups such as First Nations peoples, young people and culturally and linguistically diverse groups	●	●	●	●
Develop and implement an engagement framework to build support for organ and tissue donation, strengthening opportunities for collaboration and ideation between community, advocates, volunteers, stakeholders, governments and partners	●	●	●	●

Table 4: Build support — performance measures

Measure	Current	2024	2025	2026	2027
Eligible Australians (16 years and over) are registered on the Australian Organ Donor Register ^{1,2}	36%	40%	43%	46%	50%
Registered donors have discussed donation with their family ³	78%	82%	85%	87%	90%
Eligible Australians (16 years and over) are aware of the DonateLife brand ^{4,5}	28%	31%	34%	37%	40%

Sources

- 1 Australian Organ Donor Register
- 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, National, State and Territory Population
- 3 Organ and Tissue Authority, DonateLife Audit
- 4 Community survey via YouGov
- 5 Current result as at June 2024

Optimise opportunities

Donation and transplantation services deliver the best outcomes

Only around 2% of deaths in hospital occur in such a way that organ donation is medically possible, so every donation opportunity is precious. A national approach enables as many Australians as possible to have the opportunity to donate, so that more people have access to life-changing transplantation.



Identify donors & increase consent

Objective

DonateLife receives notification of all patients approaching end-of-life in intensive care and emergency departments for assessment for potential organ donation.

Why it's important

Notification to DonateLife means the opportunity to donate is explored whenever it is possible and that the wishes of individuals are respected. Suitability for donation is ascertained and the person's registration status is checked so their wishes can be made known to their family. Donation specialists assist families through providing accurate information and support, including throughout the entire process if donation proceeds.



Drive excellence in donation services

Objective

Lead, implement and monitor nationally consistent best donation practice in Australia through clinical practice improvement initiatives to provide exceptional care throughout the donation process.

Why it's important

Donation leading to transplantation is a complex process with many steps. Optimising practices in donor identification, family approach, donor care and assessment, organ allocation and retrieval is important in enabling the best outcomes for donors, for their families and for those on the transplant waitlist.



Increase safe & equitable transplantation

Objective

Support the donation and transplant sectors to adopt best clinical practices policy and technology that enables optimal organ allocation and utilisation so more people have access to life-changing transplantation.

Why it's important

Transplantation is the best and sometimes only treatment option for organ failure, saving or enhancing the life of the recipient, and providing benefits to their family and the broader community. Supporting the sectors to adopt robust practices, policies and frameworks will improve access to and outcomes from organ transplantation.

~1,800

Australians are waitlisted for a life-changing organ transplant

Table 5: Optimise opportunities — key activities

Key activities	'24–25	'25–26	'26–27	'27–28
Undertake engagement initiatives with states and territories, hospital executives and the DonatLife Network to drive a positive donation culture within hospitals, and continue to further increase performance outcomes	●	●	●	●
Support the delivery of nationally consistent best practice donation processes through the DonatLife Network, including provision of consistent, expert advice for transplantation best practice	●	●	●	●
Collaborate with states and territories to improve the capacity and capability of the organ donation, retrieval and transplantation systems	●	●	●	●
Work with the DonatLife Network and hospitals to create, support and deliver nationally consistent professional education and resources to improve capability	●	●	●	●
Work with the donation sector to sustain the elements of the Clinical Practice Improvement Program to deliver best practice in intensive care units and emergency departments	●	●	●	●
Collaborate with the eye and tissue sectors to maintain tissue donation as part of deceased organ donation	●	●	●	●
Seek feedback from families on their hospital experience to support improvements of donation services	●	●	●	●
Collaborate with relevant professional organisations, in Australia and internationally, to learn and share guidelines and information of current best practice and emerging evidence	●	●	●	●
Deliver a national induction and orientation program for the DonatLife Network	●	●	●	●
Increase opportunities for living donation, including developing and implementing a strategy to increase living donation	●	●	●	
Support, in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and jurisdictional governments, the Australian Law Reform inquiry into human tissue law	●	●	●	
Provide support for DonatLife Network staff to increase their capability through professional development opportunities	●	●	●	●

Table 6: Optimise opportunities — performance measures

Measure	Current	2024	2025	2026	2027
National organ donation consent rate ¹	55%	60%	63%	66%	70%
Routine notification to DonatLife of all planned end-of-life in an intensive care unit or emergency department ¹	85%	91%	95%	100%	100%
Donation conversations with families involve a donation specialist nurse ¹	84%	85%	89%	92%	95%

Sources

1 Organ and Tissue Authority, DonatLife Audit

Enhance systems

Enable quality outcomes through information, technology and resources

Underpinning a coordinated and consistent national approach is the effective use of enabling capability — information, technology, and resources — an essential part of achieving continuous improvements in clinical practice and community awareness.



Monitor, collect, analyse & report national performance

Objective

Monitor, collect, analyse and report information and data to provide evidence, support decision-making and drive continuous improvement in organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Why it's important

Clinical data informs program design and delivery, which drives best clinical practices and efficiencies in donation and transplantation practices. Data about community attitudes, beliefs and expectations is critical in addressing barriers to donation and informing the approach to increase donation consent rates. National performance data is distributed to support strategic decision-making and continuous improvement across the donation and transplantation sectors.



Advance quality, safety & efficiency

Objective

The organ donation and transplantation system is safe, efficient and effective through clinical guidelines, timely surveillance practices and the adoption of state-of-the-art technology.

Why it's important

Transplant recipients, donors and families, as well as the Australian community trust that the organ donation and transplantation system is as safe and effective as possible. Optimal systems and state-of-the-art technology enable improvements in efficiency, equity of access, donation and transplant outcomes, and mitigation of emerging risks.



Sustain specialist resources

Objective

Dedicated resources are available through collective funding from the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to enable the system to have the infrastructure and expertise necessary to support donation and transplantation.

Why it's important

Resourcing should not be a barrier to donation and transplantation. An effective system requires funding to employ specialist staff and cover associated donation and transplantation costs.

260

donation specialist staff support
~95 hospitals across Australia

Table 7: Enhance systems – key activities

Key activities	'24–25	'25–26	'26–27	'27–28
Enhance the technology and systems that support donation and transplantation to drive clinical best practice	●	●	●	●
Monitor, collect, analyse and report waitlist, mortality, donation and transplantation data	●	●	●	●
Analyse clinical data to inform program design and delivery, driving best clinical practices and efficiencies in organ donation processes	●	●	●	●
Distribute national and jurisdictional performance data to support strategic decision-making and continuous improvement across the donation and transplantation sectors	●	●	●	●
Continue to evolve the Australian Vigilance and Surveillance System for Organ Donation and Transplantation, which supports the collection and retrospective analysis of serious adverse events and reactions relating to deceased and living organ donation	●	●	●	●
Collect and provide data to support the ongoing review and implementation of the clinical and ethical guidelines and other publications	●	●	●	●
Collect international and community data to benchmark and understand the barriers to organ donation and opportunities to broaden support for donation and transplantation	●	●	●	●
Maintain collective funding from the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to enable the system to have the expertise necessary to support organ and tissue donation and transplantation	●	●	●	●

Table 8: Enhance systems – performance measures

Measure	Current	2024 and beyond
Hospital and jurisdictional performance data and analysis disseminated ^{1,2}	Dashboards and tailored analysis are distributed broadly across the DonateLife Network in a variety of formats to inform and monitor hospital clinical practice	Dashboards and tailored analysis are distributed broadly across the DonateLife Network in a variety of formats, including through self-service, to inform, shape and monitor hospital clinical practice
Waitlist, donation and transplantation data is publicly available ^{2,3}	National waitlist, donation and transplant activity metrics are publicly available	National and state patient waitlist, organ donation, retrieval and transplant activity metrics are publicly available on an annual basis
Increased utilisation of donation and transplantation information systems ^{3,4}	Increase use of OrganMatch for waitlist management National capture of adverse events in the Serious and Adverse Event Reporting database	Establishment of OrganMatch as the central patient waitlisting, recipient matching and offer management system National capture of an expanded range of adverse events across the sector in the Serious and Adverse Event Reporting database

Sources

- 1 Organ and Tissue Authority, DonateLife Audit
- 2 Australia and New Zealand Organ Donation Registry
- 3 LifeBlood, OrganMatch
- 4 Organ and Tissue Authority, Serious Adverse Event Reporting database

