



**The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP**  
**Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Young Australians encouraged to take the lead – don't delay, register today**

The Australian Government is urging young Australians to put their good intentions about organ donation into effect by registering and sharing their decision online.

In a message to young Australians, the Assistant Minister for Health, Ken Wyatt, said that DonateLife Week provides a great opportunity to make time to join the Australian Organ Donor Register. Currently, just eight per cent of 18-24 year olds have registered their donation decision.

In the lead up to *DonateLife Week*, Mr Wyatt said that, overall, 69 per cent of Australians said they were willing to become organ and tissue donors, yet only 33 per cent of adults had joined the national register.

"In most cases, people say they just haven't got around to it," Mr Wyatt said. "But while they delay, Australians of all ages are waiting for a life-saving transplant.

"Registering is very simple and has no down side – and it just might mean the world to someone who needs help to stay alive or live a normal life."

Mr Wyatt today visited the Liver Transplant Unit at the Austin Hospital in Melbourne to speak with liver transplant specialists and patients waiting in hope for a life-saving transplant.

A new video launched by Mr Wyatt contrasts the anguish of waiting for a transplant with those every-day things people find themselves waiting for, such as a holiday, a birth or simply our morning coffee.

The gap between supporting organ donation in theory and declaring support on the national register is greatest among young adults.

"It's understandable that when you're young you don't think too much about mortality, but it's something we all need to think about and discuss," Mr Wyatt said.

"*DonateLife Week*, which begins on 31 July, is a great opportunity to focus on this issue, discuss it with friends and family and register your decision at [donatelifegov.au](http://donatelifegov.au). Make it official. Register and share your decision online and then take a leadership role and encourage your family and friends to do the same."

Increasing rates of organ donation enabled a record 707 Australians to receive life saving transplants in the first six months of this year. A new annual record was also set in 2015, of 1,241 organ recipients.

Currently around 1,500 Australians are waiting for a life saving transplant, with a further 12,000 people on dialysis waiting for a new kidney.

Mr Wyatt said nine in ten families agreed to organ donation where their loved one was a registered donor. This drops to just five in ten where the deceased was not registered and the family had no prior knowledge.

He said it was easy to register online at the [DonateLife website](#), which provides a simple way for people to self-select their preferred method of registration.

People who previously registered via a driver's licence are encouraged to check that their details on the Register are current by contacting Medicare on 1800 777 203 or by Email [AODR@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:AODR@medicareaustralia.gov.au).

**For media enquiries:**

Jamila Savoy-Soubotian, Minister Wyatt's office on 0447 680 444

To view the campaign video and images, visit the [DonateLife week website](#)

You can view the [full campaign video](#) and the [30 second campaign video](#) on [DonateLife's youtube channel](#).