



**Senator the Hon Fiona Nash  
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HEALTH**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

24 September 2014

**New study highlights positive outcomes for donor families**

Organ and tissue donation can bring comfort to donor family members in their loss of a loved one and enable something positive to come out of tragedy.

These are the key findings of a new study released today by the Organ and Tissue Authority highlighting families' experience of organ and tissue donation.

"The Donor Family Study provides a valuable insight into the family experience of the donation process, from initial donation conversations through to follow-up support given to donor families," the Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash said.

"Most donor families surveyed (81%) said organ and tissue donation provided an opportunity for something positive to come out of a tragedy. For 94% of donor family members, the donation process provided them with comfort in their loss of a loved one."

Other key motivating factors for families to agree to organ and tissue donation included the belief that their loved one would have wanted to help others and to enable someone else to live a better life.

The Donor Family Study also found that most donor family members felt discussions about donation were handled sensitively and with compassion, and that they were given sufficient information to make an informed and enduring decision about organ and tissue donation.

"Perhaps most importantly, the study reveals that families who had previously discussed organ and tissue donation with their loved one, found the donation decision much easier than those who had never had the discussion," Minister Nash said.

The Donor Family Study, commissioned by the Organ and Tissue Authority, surveyed 186 people from 132 families who agreed to or declined a loved one becoming an organ or tissue donor in 2010 and 2011. This study will be conducted every two years from 2014 to ensure the views of donor families are well understood.

Minister Nash said the results of this and future studies would help ensure that appropriate support continues to be provided to all donor families.

"While the study showed overall results on families' assessment of the quality of care, information and support provided to them in the donation process, I acknowledge that the experience of donor family members is a deeply personal one.

“I thank each and every family member who participated in this important study,” Minister Nash said.

The results of the study will inform review and improvement of the donor family support services delivered across the DonateLife Network. It will also inform continued refinement of the professional education for conduct of family donation conversations by medical staff and donation specialists in the DonateLife Network.

The study can be found at: [www.donatelife.gov.au/national-wave-1-donor-family-study](http://www.donatelife.gov.au/national-wave-1-donor-family-study)

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