Organ Donation – Increased funding

Why is this important?
- Organ donation saves lives by providing around 700 Australians each year the opportunity to undergo organ transplants. Australia is internationally recognised for our strong record of successful organ transplantations.
- However, Australia does not have enough organ donors to meet the needs of those Australians requiring transplants, and continues to lag behind other OECD countries in our rate of organ donation. Organ donation rates in Australia have remained unchanged at a rate of 10 donors per million population over the last decade.

Who will benefit?
- Up to 2,000 Australians are waiting for organ transplantations at any one time. Tragically, each year some of these Australians will die waiting due to the shortage of organs for transplantation.

What funding is the Government committing to the initiative?
- The Government will provide new funding of $28.4 million over four years to fund a variety of initiatives to improve rates of organ donation in Australia, including community awareness campaigns, expanding the ways people can register to donate their organs, improving quality and safety of organs for transplantation, making waiting lists nationally consistent, supporting the Australian and World Transplant Games, and establishing an expert taskforce of clinicians and specialists to help implement these initiatives.

What have we done in the past?
- This funding is in addition to the $48.8 million the Government has already allocated over four years to fund service delivery in the blood and organ sectors and in providing direct financial assistance to Australians under the Bone Marrow Transplant Programme.

When will the initiative conclude?
- This initiative will be reviewed in the 2010-11 Budget.