

## Tissue Donation – You can make a difference too!

Following the successful campaigns to increase organ donation awareness since the organ donation taskforce recommendations in 2006-7 there has been a subsequent steady increase in organ donation.

Unfortunately this has not been mirrored in tissue donation and although tissue donation may not always save the lives of its recipients, it can dramatically improve the quality of life for the individual and their loved ones.



NHS  
Blood and Transplant

Karl received life-saving grafts thanks to tissue donors

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity

**One tissue donor can save or improve up to 50 lives**

To find out more and to register as a tissue donor visit:  
[nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation](http://nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation)

Tissue Donation

The partnership between NHSBT and the UK military has helped save and improve the lives of many troops in operation, including former soldier Private Karl Hinett.

Whilst operating in the Gulf War, Private Hinett was one of five soldiers in a tank that came under attack from rioters during a raid on an Iraqi prison. The tank was petrol bombed in the ensuing chaos and Private Hinett had to dive to safety. With 37% burns to his hands, legs, arms and face, the soldier was rushed to hospital where he began a long period of rehabilitation.

Private Hinett said, *"I had 16 operations in total with skin grafts on my forehead and cheeks. It has been quite a long journey from the moment I held my hands up only to see lots of dead, melted skin. I'm so thankful to the people who agreed to donate their own tissue and the skill and dedication of the staff who helped recover me"*.

NHS Blood and Transplant Tissue Services greatly depend on the kindness and generosity of Health Care Professionals, Funeral Directors, Police and Bereavement Officers in approaching the subject of donation with recently bereaved families.

Approaching the subject of tissue donation should be normal practice and a routine part of the end of life / after death care pathway, therefore we would advise that the subject is approached at the time of informing the relatives of their loved ones death. It is important to remember that donation is a positive act of giving in an otherwise tragic situation and that the subject should not be taboo but a continuation of care and respecting the patient's wishes.

Jo works within Tissue Services National Referral Centre as an Administrator and has done for a number of years. Jo found herself being asked to make a decision about tissue donation when she lost her mum Doreen to cancer in 2012.

Devout Catholic Doreen, who was 67, was strongly in favour of donation, and with Jo's blessing, her corneas were successfully transplanted to the eyes of two people, helping to restore their sight.

Jo said, *"My mum was on the Organ Donor Register and we talked about it when she got ill. She said that she wanted to donate after her death and would have donated anything she could. I feel really proud of what my mum did and it gave me comfort. It's hard to find positives when something so awful happens to you but we were fulfilling her wishes and there are two people now walking around somewhere with a much better quality of life"*.



NHS  
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Jo's mum helped transform lives by donating her corneas

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Tissue Donation

**To refer a potential patient for tissue donation, contact our Specialist Nurses in the National Referral Centre on 0800 432 0559 to discuss the case further.**

If you would like to know more about tissue donation or how you can help within your Hospital / Trust / Mortuary to increase tissue donation awareness and ultimately referrals, please do not hesitate to contact me below.

On behalf of all Tissue Services staff, donors and their loved ones, I would like to thank you all for helping us to facilitate tissue donation.

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