



THE HON CATHERINE KING MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing

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New Resource to Get Australians Talking About Donation Wishes

A new resource to help Australians overcome barriers to discussion about organ and tissue donation was today launched by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King.

The '*DonateLife Guide for Community Speakers* includes a step-by-step presentation, case studies, and background on organ and tissue donation, DonateLife and the Gillard Government's National Reform Agenda.'

The Guide is immediately available and will be a valuable resource for community organisations, community leaders and DonateLife staff and supporters.

"Family discussion levels are at their highest since the launch of the DonateLife campaign in May 2010 but one in three of those Australians yet to discuss their donation wishes still find the subject difficult to discuss," Ms King said.

It is vital a nationally consistent approach to educating Australians is in place to reduce confusion and misinformation about organ and tissue donation.

"Australia is continuing to build on the strong outcomes achieved in 2010. As of 31 August 2011, 231 organ donors have saved or improved the lives of 688 people, representing a 15% increase for the same year to date period in 2010."

The resource was developed by the ACT-based community organisation Gift of Life Inc. through a Community Awareness Grant provided by the Organ and Tissue Authority.

"We need to normalise organ and tissue donation as a conversation all families need to have and to have that conversation today," said President of Gift of Life, Mr David O'Leary. "Less than 2% of all deaths in hospital are in circumstances where donation can even be considered. In each of these circumstances we want family members to be prepared when asked to confirm the deceased's donation wishes. This will lead to an increase in consent rates over time."

"The Guide for Community Speakers will make an important contribution to supporting our sector to deliver consistent community talks in schools, in the workplace, in sporting clubs, in nursing homes – in all the many different places that our communities come together," said Mr O'Leary.

In launching the resource, Ms King acknowledged the donor families who, at a most difficult time, have consented to their loved one becoming a donor, "It is my hope that through use of the

Guide for Community Speakers, more Australians will feel comfortable about discussing the subject with their family so that they too will be able to say OK to donation, should the situation arise.”

The *DonateLife Guide for Community Speakers* is available from
<http://www.donatelife.gov.au/Resources/Guide-for-Community-Speakers.html>.

For all inquiries, contact the Parliamentary Secretary's office 02 6277 4230