

TO the Health Committee Clerk
Room 419, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw, Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX

11th September 2021

committee.health_organodationbill@niassembly.gov.uk

Responding to the NI Committee for Health Consultation on opt-out organ donation

Dear Sir/ Madam

UK EXPERIENCE:

I am not sure the proposed new system would make much of a difference to the rate that people alive or their relatives donate organs. There is documented evidence from Great Britain and other jurisdictions showing that public awareness campaigns improve the rate that organs are donated, but that not much difference is made by an opt-out system itself.

WALES EXPERIENCE

A Welsh study said "it was familiarity with the legislation, training and growing confidence in the healthcare professionals who approached families regarding donation in Wales, as well as high public awareness, that led to the observed increase in consent rates".

SPAIN EXPERIENCE

When Spain changed to an opt-out system there was only a little variation on the rate of giving organs. However after other measures were introduced, including staff specifically trained to raise organ donation with families that a real improvement took place. This extra staff resource of specialists could also work in an opt-in system.

NOT PROPERTY OF THE STATE

In death a body, should not become the property of the Department of Health. I strongly believe any decisions about what happens after death should be taken by the person themselves and their families, not implied by the State or NI Assembly.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

