



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

Date: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Reference: Evidence in support of Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill.

Dear Sirs/ Madams,

My name is [REDACTED] I am [REDACTED] years old and live in [REDACTED]. I wish to submit evidence in support of the Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill. I am living evidence that Organ Donation Works.

In [REDACTED] I was a fit and healthy [REDACTED] year old completing my GCSE'S. In [REDACTED] I received a life saving heart transplant. In [REDACTED] I fell very unwell very quickly when an unknown air born virus attacked my heart.

I was in heart failure and multi organ failure. I was put into a medical induced coma in [REDACTED]. I was flown by air ambulance from the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast to Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester.

When I arrived at Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester I was rushed to theatre where I had my BIVAD machine inserted into my chest to do the work of my heart. When I arrived in theatre my heart surgeon said my heart was doing very little on it's own.

I spent six weeks in a medical induced coma on my BIVAD machine and several other machines keeping me alive. On several occasions my parents were told by my medical team treatment would be withdrawn and a bereavement counsellor put in place.

I had internal bleeding as I was so critically unwell. I had two strokes. As I had internal bleeding my chest could not be closed. If my chest could not be closed I could not be woken up from my medical induced coma.

My medical team tried on several occasions to close my chest. However, my internal bleeding had not stopped.

Then a miracle happened and I started to get stronger and strong enough to close my chest. My chest was closed after several unsuccessful attempts.

My medical team began to wake me up. They were not sure how I would be when I woke up as I had two strokes. It took approximately a week to wake me up. I had to relearn to sit, stand, walk, talk, drink and eat.

I walked everyday with all my machines attached to me whilst I still couldn't eat or drink as my swallow wasn't strong enough yet.

Whilst I was getting stronger my medical team were assessing my heart and how much it was recovering. Unfortunately my heart did not recover enough. My medical team told me and my parents I needed a heart transplant.

I was listed on the Transplant List on [REDACTED]. I was at the top of the list as I was being kept alive by my BIVAD machine and I was running out of time. I had not much time left on my BIVAD machine. Days.

The following day [REDACTED] my Transplant Nurse came to me at 5pm and told me and my parents I had been offered a new heart.

I received my precious gift of a new heart on [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. When I received my heart transplant I could not be woken again because of internal bleeding. I was woken up a week after my heart transplant and one day before my [REDACTED] birthday.

I had to relearn to sit, stand, walk, talk, drink and eat for a second time. My new heart was not making its own rhythm and I had a pacemaker inserted. Which I still have today.

In [REDACTED] after extensive physiotherapy and arrangements put in place by the Rapid Response Team I returned home with my parents to my little sister after four months away from home.

I write to you today and share my very personal story with you from my heart. Tissue and Organ Donation is extremely important to me and my family. As it should be to everyone.

If this can happen to me a fit and healthy [REDACTED] year old it has the potential to happen to anyone. Anyone could be that person waiting for that call that a life saving organ is available for them or their loved one. Now imagine that call never comes. It's too late.

We need to ensure we get the Tissue and Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill into Law. As part of the UK Northern Ireland needs to join the rest of the UK in making this extremely important Bill Law.

Northern Ireland needs to ensure we are doing everything in our power to make as many organs available for those who's precious life depends on them. Organ Donation should be possible for everyone who needs a life saving organ transplant. No one should die waiting on a organ donor.

I am so very grateful every single day [REDACTED] for my Organ Donor and their family. The extremely brave decision they made as a person and family has given me the extra special gift of life. I will hold them in my heart for the rest of my life as will my family. They truly are our heroes.

Without my organ donor and their family making that extremely brave decision at an extremely difficult time I know that I might not be alive today writing this letter to you. Myself and my family have contacted my organ donor family and know that their brave decision saved six precious life's.

I have been given the gift of life and without it I would not be here today. I have celebrated my [REDACTED] birthday, completed my GCSE'S, celebrated my [REDACTED] birthday. I have spent every day being so grateful and will continue to for the rest of my life.

Passing this extremely important Bill into Law should really be an easy decision for everyone involved. Evidence has already shown how successful it has been in England, Scotland and Wales. This Tissue and Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill will save many precious lives. That's all that matters in the end. Nothing is more important than life.

[REDACTED] I spend my free time creating videos of my personal story to help raise awareness of Organ Donation and Heart Failure. [REDACTED]

I am very grateful for you taking the time to read my evidence. I hope it has a positive effect on helping you all make the right decision for the people and families of Northern Ireland by passing the Tissue and Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) into Law.

Many thanks for your time.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]