

GIVING SOMEONE LIKE ME
ANOTHER CHANCE AT
LIFE IS THE BEST PRESENT
IN THE WORLD...I FEEL
LIKE SUPERMAN!





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→ AUSTRALIAN ORGAN DONOR REGISTER

Key business results

The number of potential organ donor and tissue registrations increased 160.9 per cent during the year. There are now 4,672,117 individuals who have had their details included on the Australian Organ Donor Register (the Donor Register).

At a glance

Potential organ donor registrations at 30 June 2001–02 and 2002–03

Australian Organ Donor Register	2001–02	2002–03	% change
Number of potential organ donor registrations	1,790,967	4,672,117	160.9% increase
Number of serviced calls to enquiry line	14,891	29,757	99.8% increase

Overview

The Donor Register was officially launched on 12 November 2000 and is sponsored by the Department of Health and Ageing. It has helped raise the profile of organ and tissue donation for transplantation in Australia and provides a national coordinated method for Australians to record their intentions in regard to organ and tissue donation for transplantation.

Individuals wishing to record their intention to donate may register online or download a paper registration form to return to HIC. The form is available at www.hic.gov.au or from Medicare offices. Entry onto the Donor Register is voluntary and allows individuals to have complete choice over which organs and tissue they are prepared to donate for transplantation.

HIC developed a national database of intending organ and tissue donors and continues to work with existing State registers to negotiate the transfer of State data. Existing State registers data has been transferred from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania (neither the Australian Capital Territory nor the Northern Territory have existing data to transfer). Most States now include the donor register insert in the driver's licence renewal process.

Australian Organ Donor Register website

The website provides general information about:

- organ and tissue donation for transplantation;
- statistics on the number of potential organ and tissue donors; and
- a registration mechanism for potential donors.

It contains a secured area where authorised members of the organ and tissue donation network can identify the donation wishes of a potential organ donor throughout Australia, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

How information in the register is used

Access to information on the Donor Register is strictly controlled utilising PKI security and protocols to ensure privacy and confidentiality of participants are protected. Only authorised medical personnel, upon the death of an individual, are able to use the information. With knowledge of the donor's intentions, as registered with the Donor Register, they notify the next of kin and seek final consent to allow donor proceedings to begin.

Education and promotion

The Donor Register asks Australians to 'sign on to save a life'. HIC delivered this message nationally during 2002–03 through a marketing and communication strategy that included:

- distributing information brochures and registration forms through driver's licence renewal mailouts and Medicare card mailouts;
- participating in Australian Organ Donor awareness week;
- managing the Donor Register's 1800 777 203 hotline;
- liaising extensively with the media;
- updating monthly Donor Register statistics on HIC's website;
- using HIC publications such as *Your Health Matters*, *Forum* and *Bulletin Board* to reach key audiences such as doctors, pharmacists and consumers;
- publishing monthly stakeholder newsletters, carrying current processing figures for the Donor Register and general program information;
- distributing promotional material at conferences, workshops, educational seminars and in Medicare offices; and
- assisting with the promotion of the 2002 Australian Transplant Games through the Medicare office network.

Research

HIC commissioned Woolcott Research Pty Ltd to carry out extensive market research to gauge attitudes towards, and awareness of, organ donation and the Donor Register. In developing the research questions, HIC consulted closely with the Department of Health and Ageing and Australians Donate, the organ donor network's representative body. The research found there was overwhelming public support (96 per cent) for the concept of organ donation, but revealed a gap between attitudinal and behavioural support. The research will help the Donor Register to develop effective, targeted communication strategies in 2003–04 and beyond.

Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week

The third Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week was launched by the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator The Hon Kay Patterson, at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, on Monday 17 February 2003. A collaborative effort between HIC, the Department of Health and Ageing, Australians Donate and the state-based organ donation agencies, it was successful in achieving its objectives of raising awareness of organ and tissue donation and encouraging Australians to join the Donor Register. The key messages of 'think, talk, tell' and 'sign on to save a life' were well reported in the national and regional media, resulting in a rise of 16,378 registrations over the six weeks following the launch.

Bowel Cancer Screening Register

In the 2000–01 Budget, the Australian Government announced it would invest \$7.2 million over four years to improve knowledge about the early detection of bowel cancer. This funding is being used to implement the Bowel Cancer Screening Pilot Program, which is designed to assess the feasibility, acceptability and cost effectiveness of a bowel cancer screening program in Australia.

The pilot aims to reduce the number of Australians who die each year from bowel cancer. On 1 January 2003 approximately 69,000 people, aged between 55–74 years, were invited to participate in the pilot (which is not a clinical trial). The results will be used to decide whether and how to implement a national bowel cancer screening program.

HIC's role in the Bowel cancer screening pilot program is to assist in its administration including:

- establishment of the Bowel Cancer Screening Register;
- collection of information about participation in the pilot; and
- mailing house functions.

Through the Bowel Cancer Screening Register HIC is responsible for:

- creating and maintaining a register of pilot participants;
- inviting participants to be screened (pilot sites are located in the town of Mackay, parts of Southern and Western Adelaide, and parts of North East Melbourne);
- reminding participants who have been called or recalled to screening, but who have not completed a screening test within a specified interval, to undertake screening;
- issuing reminders to participants at agreed intervals, where a participant has had a positive Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) result, and where a participant has not commenced follow-up investigation procedures;
- creating payment arrangements for the medical services components of the screening program, e.g. GP consultations, pathology and colorectal procedures;
- collecting clinical and diagnostic data about patients participating in the pilot;
- providing monitoring and performance reporting mechanisms; and
- operating and servicing a 1800 information line for participants and providers.

