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## Nation's first dedicated organ donation research unit at RPA

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital will host Australia's first dedicated organ donation and transplantation unit, in a bid to increase donation rates across the state.

The NSW Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, the Hon Jillian Skinner, today visited RPA, which provides world-leading transplantation services, the only liver transplant unit and the largest kidney transplant unit in NSW, to make the announcement.



Minister Jillian Skinner with liver recipient Robert Mihalic, donor family member Philippa Delahoy and kidney recipient Racha Elzahab

The Minister also launched Sydney Local Health District's strategic plan, [Organ Donation for Transplantation Plan 2014-2017](#), developed through extensive consultation with the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, clinical experts from RPA, other districts and overseas.

The plan also includes the creation of the nation's first dedicated academic position for organ donation for transplantation, a conjoint appointment with the University of Sydney; the re-establishment of an SLHD organ and tissue donation steering committee; and additional staff to continue to provide 24/7 coverage throughout the hospital, strengthening our Whole of Hospital approach to organ donation and enhanced auditing program.

The Chief Executive of Sydney Local Health District, Dr Teresa Anderson, said the District was committed to being an Australian leader in organ donation for transplantation yet it was clear that significant progress was needed to achieve greater levels of donation.

"We have come a long way but there is still much to be done to ensure that Australia's organ donation for transplantation system meets the nation's present demand for organ transplantation and its future needs without significant change," she said.

"Access to organ donation for transplantation is essential to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for people with end stage disease such as kidney, liver, heart, lung or pancreas failure or for people receiving tissue donation (bone, corneas or skin) to improve the quality of their lives.

"This is especially so given that the demand for transplanted organs is anticipated to continue to grow with the ageing of Australia's population and the increased incidence of lifestyle diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, hepatitis C, cancer and pancreatitis."

The acting co-medical director of the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, and RPA intensivist, Associate Professor Michael O’Leary, said today’s announcement was another significant milestone of organ and tissue donation achievements in NSW.

“Over the past five years, NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service has helped more than 1300 recipients through the generosity of more than 443 organ donors – 51 per cent more donors than there were when our service was first established,” he said.

“During this time, the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service has trained more staff in hospitals to discuss organ donation with families, provided new laboratories for tissue banks, reduced waiting times for corneal surgery at the Lions NSW Eye Bank and raised the awareness of organ and tissue donation.”



## Organ Donation for Transplantation Plan 2014-2017