



This festive season, you can give the gift of life...

Dear Friend of RPA,

My name is Lisa Weatherdon, I am 26 years old and have suffered health problem since I was three months-of-age when I was first diagnosed with Infantile Polycystic Kidney Disease, and Congenital Hepatic Fibrosis of the liver.

Throughout my entire childhood, I endured countless admissions to hospital for tests and day surgery procedures while doctors worked hard to manage my illness. This was tough on my family and me but nothing ever phased me. Growing up, I was a normal child who loved life and school and did everything possible to live a normal life and have fun with my friends and family. However, we knew that it was only a matter of time before my kidneys and liver would fail irreversibly, and the only option would be a transplant.

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Then when I was 14, my father gave me the most wonderful and irreplaceable gift anyone could give. Being a living related compatible donor, I was lucky enough for him to give me one of his kidneys. My surgery lasted ten long hours involving both the removal of my old kidney and the transplantation of my Dad's kidney.

Thanks to my Dad and the transplant team I led a fairly healthy and normal life. That is, until April 2009 when I contracted a terrible liver infection that meant I had countless admissions to hospital to try and successfully treat the infection via intravenous therapy. But in the end, nothing worked and my final admission to RPA Hospital happened in October last year. The following

January it became clear that there was no other option but to place me on the Liver Transplant waiting list.

The wait felt like a lifetime with constant transfers to intensive care to keep my infection under control. I lost a significant amount of weight. It was the worst time of my life and I thought I was never going to get better and there was no hope for me at all. It was during this period that my boyfriend surprised me with an engagement proposal. It lifted my spirits a lot and kept me going, knowing how much he cared about me and wanted me to stay strong and keep fighting so we could spend the rest of our lives together. The wonderful RPA medical team however managed to keep my infection under control and during the last week of March 2010 had transferred me back to the ward.

It was on the 6th of April 2010, when I received the long-awaited call I had been praying for - A NEW LIVER. I was so happy that I was about to receive another chance at life. I was also very thankful for the opportunity the organ donor family had given me and I prayed that peace be with them and their loved ones as well.



Following my liver transplant, I spent the next few weeks in hospital with two trips back to theatre due to complications but finally I got through it and was discharged on 30th April 2010. Since my discharge I have had countless checkups, which are slowly becoming less frequent due to the normal function of my new liver. I have also gone back to work three days a week for a few hours at a time and I am so happy to be back among my friends again, leading a normal life.

My parents and my fiancée are all extremely proud of how far I have come and I cannot thank them enough, especially my mother who spent every day at my bedside while I waited for the call, keeping me smiling and laughing and being positive the whole time. Despite having been born with significant health problems, it is due to the importance of organ donation that I am here today living and enjoying the normal and healthy life I have always longed for.

This Christmas, when you are planning on making a gift to charity, please consider supporting the RPA Transplant Institute. Your donation will help RPA's researchers and help improve care and outcomes for transplant patients like me.

Best wishes

L. Weatherdown

Dear Friend of RPA

It is with great pleasure that I wish all supporters of the RPA Transplant Institute our very best wishes for the Festive Season while inviting you to support our annual end-of-year appeal. With your support, we can continue to promote organ donations and conduct further research into transplantation surgery.

Thankfully, this year we have seen an increase in organ donor numbers throughout NSW which has meant record numbers of both kidney and liver transplants at RPAH. This, together with the RPA Transplant Institute's continued success that underpins our clinical program by sponsoring clinically based transplant research projects – means more lives are saved.

There are two ways that you can personally help patients at RPA. You can register to be an organ donor and; you can make a financial donation to help our transplant team to continue to make substantial inroads in improving outcomes for patients in need of organ transplantation. Your donations will support our research efforts, in particular to help us develop new strategies to make transplanted kidneys and livers work better and for much longer. The initial results of new research endeavors this year has already led to two of our team members being awarded competitive grants from external sources – recognition that the transplant unit at RPA continues to be a leader in the field of transplant surgery. We look forward to bringing you more news about the outcomes of our research in the May 2011 edition of our annual newsletter.

At this time of year, we hope Lisa's story will inspire you to continue your support with your tax-deductible donation and help the RPA Transplant Institute to continue its commitment to improving patient care that can help save the lives of people like Lisa.

On behalf of all the transplant team at RPAH and the RPA Transplant Institute, please accept our gratitude for your ongoing support and our best wishes to you and your family for the Festive Season and good health and happiness in 2011.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Allen

