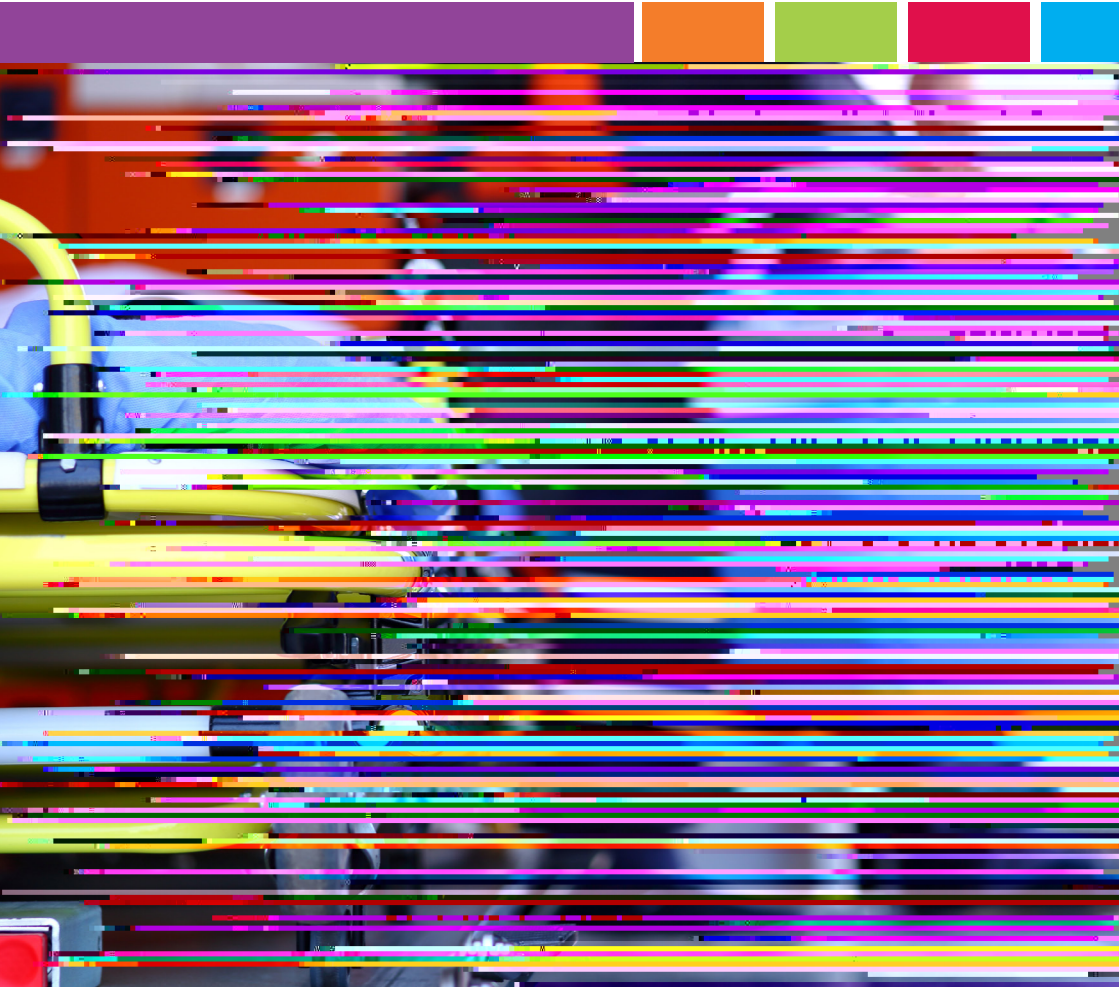




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The Royal College of Nursing supports an opt-out system of consent for organ and tissue donations after death, where there is evidence that certain safeguards, supports and resources are in place.

The safeguards, supports and resources RCN members would expect to accompany any opt-out system are:

- Sufficient resources are made available to define and support the additional infrastructure and capacity required to increase the rate of successful donations, including increased and sustainable investment in the number of Specialist Nurses in Organ Donation, before any opt-out system is introduced.
- An evaluation is commissioned to assess the medium- to long-term impact of any opt-out system on the rate of successful donations. Any opt-out system is reviewed on the basis of this evidence.
- Governments start a public awareness campaign no less than a year before any change to an opt-out system, and then sustain a campaign. There are multiple, accessible routes for every adult to opt-out of donating at any time, if they so choose.
- Governments start an awareness and education programme for all health care professionals, tailored to the needs of specific groups, no less than a year before any change to an opt-out system, and then sustain a programme. Clear and up-to-date guidance on the operation of any opt-out scheme is available to all health care staff.
- Trained health professionals must discuss the expressed wishes of the deceased person with the person's family, where contactable, before any donation proceeds. If a family does not want a donation to go ahead it will not be forced.
- The opt-out system is limited to adults only (as defined in each UK country). Consent for donations from children and young people should continue to be addressed by opt-in/parental consent arrangements.
- Adults who have never had the capacity to consent would not be included in the opt-out scheme. The scheme must also make clear how adults who lost the capacity to consent for a period before death would be excluded from the opt-out.
- The opt-out scheme is limited to organs and tissue donated for transplant. Adults must still opt-in to donate organs and tissue for research and other purposes.
- Any opt-out scheme makes clear which organs and tissues are included.
- Any opt-out scheme should have clear residency criteria included to ensure that temporary residents are not presumed to have given consent.

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