



STATES OF ALDERNEY

Consultation on Possible Changes to the Organ Donation Scheme

Currently, Guernsey has an "opt-in" system for organ donation. This means that people who wish to donate in the event of their death need to make their wishes clear. This can be by telling family or friends, giving their consent through their driving licence, or joining the NHS Organ Donor Register. However, there are many people who, although they do believe in organ donation, have not joined the Organ Donor Register. Without making this express decision, it is more difficult for doctors to establish a patient's wishes and more difficult for friends and family to honour them.

The States of Alderney is considering proposals by Guernsey's Committee for Health and Social Care which would reflect changes made in Wales. These have resulted in an increase in donations by moving towards a deemed consent or, soft opt-out, system. The proposals would mean that residents of Guernsey (and potentially of Alderney) would request that they are removed from the register, either totally, or with respect to particular organs, if they did not wish them to be donated when they die. Central to the system would be ensuring that sensitive processes are in place to enable all islanders to have the opportunity to record their decision clearly and for families to be consulted before any organs are taken. The States of Alderney and the Committee for Health and Social Care recognise that organ donation is an immensely sensitive and personal matter, and a decision that no one wants to make on behalf of a family member. They are consulting on whether these proposals provide the appropriate balance between recognising the importance of organ donation and supporting islanders and their families in making informed decisions.

The States of Alderney is specifically consulting on the issue of whether a "soft opt-out" scheme for organ donation should be introduced in Alderney in parallel to the Guernsey proposals. We recognise that there are many practical challenges which present themselves in Alderney and which make it highly unlikely that the organs of people who die in Alderney could be donated. However, there are occasions when people who are resident in Alderney die in Guernsey, the UK or elsewhere and in such cases a "soft opt-out" organ donation scheme may result in organ donation which could help to save or prolong life.

We fully acknowledge that the number of occasions when these circumstances might apply are few. However, the cost of introducing a change in the law would be modest and in practice there would be no change to arrangements in Alderney. Alderney residents will be, from time to time, beneficiaries of organ donation in Guernsey, the UK or elsewhere. So being part of a "soft opt-out" scheme would be a reciprocal act in saving and improving life.

We are interested in any views on this subject you may wish to send us. It would be helpful if you could answer these specific questions as part of your response:

1. If the States of Guernsey moves to a “soft opt-out” organ donation scheme, should Alderney move to the same system or stay with the current “opt-in” system?
2. If Alderney moved to a “soft opt-out” system, would this change your own decision about organ donation? Would you be more or less likely to express a wish to be an organ donor after your death?
3. If Alderney moved to a “soft opt-out” system, how should people be informed so that they can make their wishes clear?
4. Family or long-standing friends often make the decision about donation of organs in the current system if someone who dies has not opted into the system. In a “soft opt-in” system, should the family still have a role in agreeing to a donation if someone has not opted out, or should the donation just go ahead?
5. Should someone’s family still be able to make a decision about organ donation, even if it is different to the decision someone made when they were alive?
6. It has been suggested that certain groups would be excluded from the “soft opt-in” system such as (1) people under 18; (2) people who lack capacity; (3) visitors to Alderney and Guernsey; (4) people living in Alderney or Guernsey for less than 12 months. Do you agree with these exclusions? Do you think there should be other exclusions?

We would like to hear from stakeholders and residents of Alderney about these proposals. Our consultation is open until the 5th July and you can respond by writing or emailing to:

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