

21 February, 2013

St George and Sutherland Hospitals support DonateLife Week 2013

Staff at St George and Sutherland Hospitals today announced their support for DonateLife Week, being held across the nation from Sunday 24 February, 2013, to increase Australia's organ and tissue donation rates.

To kick off DonateLife Week, Donation Specialist Nurses will be available to answer questions about organ and tissue donation outside the post office in Cronulla Mall on Thursday 28 February from 9am and outside Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club on Sunday 3 March from 8am.

There will also be an information display in the foyers of St George and Sutherland Hospitals and at the Hurstville and Penshurst Public Libraries throughout DonateLife Week.

Dr Andrew Cheng, Donation Medical Specialist at St George and Sutherland Hospitals, said any day this week is a good day to have the conversation with your family and close friends.

"It's a conversation that will help you be prepared, should you ever be asked to confirm the donation wishes of your loved one. It will also help your family be prepared should they ever be asked to confirm your wishes. I believe it's a vital conversation to have as it could one day save lives," Dr Cheng said.

"Some Australians find it difficult to bring up the subject of organ and tissue donation with family members. Deciding to have the discussion during DonateLife Week can help normalise the subject and make it OK to talk about.

"In our hospitals we have specialist doctors, nurses and social workers who will support families before, during and long after the donation process," he said.

The overwhelming majority of Australians (84%) are motivated to become a donor and help other Australians in need in the event of their death.

As an organ and tissue donor, you could transform the lives of 10 or more people. But to make your wish count, it is important to know the facts about organ and tissue donation and to register your decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register.

Every Australian family needs to know each other's wishes. This is because in Australia, the family of every potential donor is always asked to confirm the donation wishes of their loved one before organ and/or tissue donation can proceed.

DonateLife Week is Australia's national awareness week to promote organ and tissue donation. It is led by the Organ and Tissue Authority as part of the national DonateLife campaign and supported by community events and activities across Australia. For more information go to:

www.donatelife.gov.au

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