

QUEENSLAND EYE BANK FACT SHEET

- The Queensland Eye Bank (QEB) was officially opened in 1992 and is located at Princess Alexandra Hospital.
- There are more eye donors than all other organ and tissue donors combined because there are fewer medical restrictions for eye tissue donation.
- Both the cornea (the clear film on the front of the eye) and sclera (white part of the eye) can be used for transplantation with a greater than 90% success rate.
- In March 2007 the QEB retrieved eye tissue from their 5000th donor and is currently the busiest eye bank in Australia. QEB is one of only five eye banks in the country.
- Approximately 10,000 Australians have had their quality of life and sight restored with a corneal transplant supplied by the Queensland Eye Bank.
- In 2006 there were 137 Queensland eye tissue donors.
- Up to four people can receive a transplant from one eye tissue donor.
- A cornea can be stored up to 10 days (optimally seven days) before transplantation. Sclera can be stored for up to 12 months.
- There is no waiting list for corneas for transplantation. Ophthalmic surgeons book theatre dates for their patients and QEB supplies cornea for the planned surgery. QEB currently supplies between 10-14 corneas per week.
- The first corneal transplant took place in Olomouc, now in the east of the Czech Republic by Dr Eduard Zirm, an ophthalmic specialist on 5 December 1905. The recipient was Alois Gloger, a labourer who had been blinded in an accident while working with lime. The operation was a success, and the 43-year-old patient could see again. He retained his eyesight for the rest of his life and was back working on his farm within three months.
- In Australia, a person has a 10 times greater chance of requiring an organ or tissue transplant than of becoming a donor. Organ donation is medically possible in less than one percent of all deaths that occur, but more people can donate tissues, as there are fewer medical restrictions.
- In 2006, 202 Australians donated organs, benefiting some 731 transplant recipients; 36 of the 202 organ donors were from Queensland. In Queensland, 231 people became tissue donors. There is no age limit for becoming an organ or tissue donor. Each potential donor is medically assessed at the time of death to determine whether donation is possible.
- The Australian Organ Donor Register allows you to register your consent to donate. By registering your consent and telling your family, partner and friends your wishes, you have done the two most important things to ensure your wish to donate will be carried out. Families will remain central to the donation of a loved ones organs and tissues.
- A person's decision to help others by donating organs for transplantation does not allow for the removal of organs or tissues for any other purpose. Additional consent must be given specifically for organs/tissues to be used for science or research.
- Australians have been receiving life giving organ transplants (heart, lung, liver, kidneys and pancreas) as well as tissue transplants (corneas (*eye tissue*), heart valves and bone tissue) since 1965. To date more than 30,000 men, women and children have received life saving or life enhancing transplants.

Sign on to save lives!

Australian Organ Donor Register: Ph 1800 777 203. Website: www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

Queenslanders Donate: Ph (07) 3240 2350. Website: www.health.qld.gov.au/queenslandersdonate

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