

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

13 July, 2015

### **Heart donor recipient inspires students during school talk**

COMING face-to-face with organ recipients is one of the best parts of nurse Liz Hill's job.

As the clinical nurse consultant for organ and tissue donation at the Toowoomba Hospital, it is Ms Hill's job to not only co-ordinate the processes involved with donation but also to promote the practice across the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service.

Part of this community promotion is school talks and last month, Ms Hill visited Warwick's Scots College PGC for the first time.

During the visit Ms Hill was pleased to meet donor heart recipient and Head of Junior Boys Boarding at the college, Stewart Bailey.

"People like Stewart are the reason I do what I do," Ms Hill said.

After suffering from a rare form of leukaemia and undergoing forms of chemotherapy in his 20s, Mr Bailey was left with heart damage, reoccurring 'mini' heart attacks and strokes.

He received a pacemaker to correct the damage and to improve his health, but this unfortunately was unsuccessful and Mr Bailey was placed into palliative care in a Brisbane hospital.

"Because of all of the treatments I had previously received, I was told there was a slim chance of finding a suitable heart," he said.

"I told the doctors to put me on the (donor organ waiting) list, to see what would happen.

"Twenty-seven-and-a-half hours later, at 4.30 in the morning, I was told they had found me a heart."

Twelve years since he received the life-saving heart transplant, Mr Bailey acknowledges his donor anniversary each year.

"Talking about organ and tissue donation is not all doom and gloom," he said.

"Yes, someone had to die for my heart but look at what can be achieved when a donation is made.

"We never want to be in a position to either be a recipient of a donor organ, or to have someone we know donate their organs, but the reality is that maybe you will face these tragic circumstances.

“If you want to save lives, let your family know your wishes. Hopefully you will never be in that position, but if you are, then something positive can happen.”

Ms Hill also emphasised that students should let their family and friends know about their wishes, if they should die.

“People can register to become organ and tissue donors through an online register, however, the final consent has to be given by the family,” Ms Hill said.

“Therefore it is important for everyone to let their friends and family know their feelings around organ and tissue donation.”

Donate Life Week will be held this year from 2 – 9 August across the nation.

It is an opportunity to openly discuss organ and tissue donation with friends and family members.

During the week, Ms Hill will host an information display in the foyer of the Toowoomba Hospital, as well as conduct other community promotions and activities.

For more information about organ and tissue donation visit [www.donatelife.gov.au](http://www.donatelife.gov.au)

## **Ends**

**Caption:** Warwick’s Scots College PGC Head of Junior Boys Boarding Stewart Bailey with year 12 students Taniesha Southeron and Niamh Whiley and Toowoomba Hospital’s Liz Hill.

**MEDIA:** Contact Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Media Team 4699 8547, 0438 702 328 or [DDHHS\\_media@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:DDHHS_media@health.qld.gov.au)