



Australian Government

National Health and
Medical Research Council

N H M R C

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MEDIA RELEASE

NHMRC releases draft Protocol for Donation after Cardiac Death for public consultation

The first nationally consistent protocol in Australia for Donation after Cardiac Death (DCD) has been released today as a draft for public consultation by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

The draft protocol was developed by the NHMRC's National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS), on behalf of the Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority (AOTDTA), to support a process that respects the rights of the patient and considers ethical, legal and medical issues in the practice of Donation after Cardiac Death.

'Cardiac death is described as the point where the heart has stopped beating and there is irreversible cessation of the circulation of blood in the body of the patient,' explained Dr Gerry O'Callaghan, National Medical Director of the Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority and Chair of the NICS DCD Protocol Working Party.

'DCD is a complicated and time critical process. It requires difficult decisions and a high degree of organisation during a very emotional and traumatic period for donor families.'

Recommendations in the protocol are based on existing national and international practice and expert opinion. Extensive consultation with representatives from the organ and tissue donation, transplantation and acute care sectors, an expert in law, an expert in ethics and a consumer has been a major part of the protocol's development to ensure their views are appropriately addressed.

To download a copy of the draft protocol and media backgrounder or to submit a comment, go to:

www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/consult/index.htm

Comments on the protocol can be submitted until 5pm AEST Friday July 24, 2009.

Release ends.

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Note to editors

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research. As part of the NHMRC, the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) works to improve health care by getting health and medical research into practice. For more information go to: www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics

Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority

The Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority was established on 1st January 2009 as an Australian Government statutory authority within the Health and Ageing portfolio. The role of the AOTDTA is to establish a nationally consistent and coordinated approach to organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The AOTDTA will work with States and Territories, clinicians, consumers and the community sector to build a world leading organ and tissue donation and transplantation system for Australia. For more information go to: www.donatelife.gov.au