



SECTION 11

Deceased Organ Transplant Waiting Lists

This chapter brings together 2024 waiting list data for the various organs. This data is not directly collected by ANZOD but has been provided by OrganMatch. In many cases more detailed information is contained in the annual reports of the relevant transplant outcome Registries. There are, however, important general considerations in interpretation of waiting list data.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to receive an organ transplant from a deceased organ donor, a person needs to be assessed as suitable to receive a transplant and then 'activated' on the organ transplant wait list. This section provides information about the wait list for each organ type in Australia.

SUGGESTED CITATION

H Opdam, C Davies, K Marshall, G Irish, 29th Report, Section 11: Deceased Organ Transplant Waiting Lists. Australia and New Zealand Organ Donation Registry, Adelaide, Australia. 2025. Available at: <https://www.anzdata.org.au/anzod/publications-2/annual-reports/>

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WAITING LIST DYNAMICS

There are some important caveats to consider when interpreting the waiting list data presented in this report.

Firstly, waiting list data is not necessarily a good indicator of actual demand for transplantation. Due to the limited availability of organs for transplantations not all people with end stage organ disease are able to be treated with transplantation and therefore each organ waiting list employs criteria for listing in order to prioritise the use of organs. There are many rules guiding eligibility for transplantation. For further information please see the Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) website 'Clinical Guidelines for Organ Transplantation from Deceased Donors'. (<https://tsanz.com.au>)

Secondly, the reasons for removal from the waiting list also vary. In some cases, an individual may die before receiving an organ transplant. In other cases (particularly for the heart, lung and liver transplant waiting lists) they may be removed due to improving health; conversely removal may reflect deteriorating health such that the risks of transplantation outweigh benefits. Data regarding whether these people subsequently return to the waiting list, remain off the list, or die without returning to the list is not available consistently for all organs.

Thirdly, the waiting list data refers only to people on the 'active' waiting list who would be transplanted immediately if an organ were available. For some organs, there are groups of patients who have been assessed but not yet 'activated' on the waiting list, or who are temporarily removed or made 'inactive'. For example, patients may develop a medical problem that makes them temporarily or permanently unfit for transplantation.

Residents of Australia or New Zealand who may or may not have been on the waiting list but then proceeded to receive a transplant overseas may not be reported to local transplant outcome Registries and therefore may remain on the local wait list impacting wait list numbers.

For all organs, data is presented in a format, examining the transitions on and off the waiting list over the period of a calendar year. It is possible those removed from the waiting list are subsequently re-listed. For organs that have criteria for urgent transplant (i.e. liver, heart) patients may be placed on the waiting list and removed very quickly and therefore point prevalent numbers do not represent the activity and readers should refer to the 'made active' number to get an idea of overall activity.

The data in the tables refer to the lists at 1 January and 31 December of each year.

In the tables presented in this chapter, the rows describe:

- Number on the active list at the beginning of each year
- Number added to the active list during the year - 'made active'
- Number removed from the active list during the year
- Number of transplants to people on the waiting list
- Number who died while on the active waiting list
- Number on the active waiting list at the end of the year

KIDNEY WAITING LIST

Data for the kidney transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch, combined with material from the ANZDATA Registry. Some people on the deceased donor kidney waiting lists may receive a kidney from a living donor, though the majority of living kidney donor recipients are not on the waiting lists. A patient is deemed fit for transplantation and activated on the deceased donor transplant list, but a living donor kidney can be made available prior to a deceased donor transplant taking place.

Data is currently only available for Australia. Negotiations are continuing to also include New Zealand data in future reports. Further material is available in the ANZDATA Annual Report at www.anzdata.org.au.

Table 11.1
Deceased Donor Kidney Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	1036	1244	1242	1453	1404	1447
Made active	1202	965	1106	1008	1196	1141
Taken off list	194	235	209	301	271	252
Transplant	789	729	681	748	870	833
Died on list	11	3	5	8	12	9
Active end of year	1244	1242	1453	1404	1447	1494

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch and ANZDATA

LIVER WAITING LIST

Data for the liver transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch only. More information may be found from the Australia and New Zealand Liver and Intestinal Transplant Registry (ANZLITR) Annual Report at <https://www.anzlitr.org/>.

Table 11.2
Deceased Donor Liver Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	111	198	164	151	159	113
Made active	360	268	263	233	251	270
Taken off list	25	51	39	13	40	15
Transplant	236	240	212	207	235	244
Died on list	12	11	25	5	22	8
Active end of year	198	164	151	159	113	116

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch.

HEART WAITING LIST

Data for the heart transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch only.

Table 11.3
Deceased Donor Heart Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	95	88	72	77	75	61
Made active	134	149	127	122	129	135
Taken off list	26	14	9	13	12	10
Transplant	98	145	108	109	127	102
Died on list	17	6	5	2	4	6
Active end of year	88	72	77	75	61	78

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch.

LUNG WAITING LIST

Data for the lung transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch only.

Table 11.4
Deceased Donor Lung Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	129	114	102	106	100	98
Made active	204	172	191	164	183	181
Taken off list	46	18	16	14	10	15
Transplant	153	155	161	138	163	136
Died on list	20	11	10	18	12	18
Active end of year	114	102	106	100	98	110

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch.

PANCREAS WAITING LIST

Data for the pancreas transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch only. It includes both people waiting for a combined kidney-pancreas transplant (the majority) and those waiting for a pancreas transplant alone. It does not include people waiting for pancreas islet cell transplants.

Table 11.5
Deceased Donor Pancreas Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	33	88	48	74	64	73
Made active	102	32	70	55	65	55
Taken off list	13	27	12	18	11	13
Transplant	31	45	32	46	44	45
Died on list	3	0	0	1	1	0
Active end of year	88	48	74	64	73	70

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch.

INTESTINE WAITING LIST

Data for the intestine transplant waiting list are derived from data supplied by OrganMatch only. It includes both people waiting for a combined organ and intestine transplant (the majority) and those waiting for an intestine only transplant.

Table 11.5
Deceased Donor Intestine Waiting List Activity*, Australia 2019-2024

Event	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active start of year	2	3	5	5	3	2
Made active	2	3	4	0	0	2
Taken off list	1	0	1	0	0	1
Transplant	0	1	3	2	1	0
Died on list	0	0	0	0	0	0
Active end of year	3	5	5	3	2	3

*Data may differ to that previously published as data is updated in subsequent years in OrganMatch.



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