

Below is an extract from an article written by Kevin Hickey, one of our Committee members, in March 2015:

Born with a crippling defect in my heart muscle, I was gravely ill as a baby and under the care of Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin. Following a relative stabilisation of my condition, I went on to live what I believed was a relatively normal, healthy existence. However, in January of 2014 my health nosedived. I presented myself to hospital in late January of that year and didn't emerge from inpatient care until mid-April, by which time I had received a heart transplant at the Mater Hospital in Dublin.□□□

My end-stage deterioration was swift and brutal, culminating in exhaustion and my heart being unable to function to any satisfactory degree without the assistance of invasive devices. So grave was my position that, by late February, I was placed on the waiting list for a transplant. My decline continued rather swiftly from that point forth, incorporating blood clots amongst other hugely painful events.□

My survival chances were grim with medical thinking being that, without a transplant, my life expectancy was abysmal – less than 50% chance of lasting a year and less than 5% likelihood of making it to 27 years of age.□□□

In late March, just as my condition was at an extremely low point, I received word from the wonderful Transplant Team in the Mater Hospital that a heart might be available. Following an excruciating wait one Saturday evening, including a battery of tests, it was agreed that the heart was a match. The operation could go ahead.□□

In the absence of organ donation, I would most likely not be here today. Not only would my existence be unlikely, it is unquestionable that my standard of living has improved immensely. I feel better now than I have done my entire life – a sense of energy that I never enjoyed with my old heart.□□□

Organ donation has provided me with the gift of life, as it has done for many others. What we must do now is encourage the message of its merits to be spread. It is truly the most generous

Kevin Hickey's Story

Written by Administrator

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thing a person can possibly do – whether said person is agreeing that the organs of a clinically dead loved-one be donated or the extremely selfless act that is living organ donation.

I cannot begin to thank all of the people in my life who have assisted me over this period, ranging from my wonderful family and friends to the fantastic medical staff in the Mater Hospital, Dublin. Of course, it is to the donor family whom I will never know that I must express the greatest gratitude.

Kevin has subsequently returned to UCD in order to complete a law degree.

He would like to stress his availability to speak with anyone affected by transplantation, especially younger people. He may be contacted on kevin.hickey92@outlook.com or (087) 0536994