

General Election May 2005



What the Politicians thought



About Kidney Disease

National Kidney Federation (NKF) survey of all major party candidates during May 2005 General Election in the UK, in respect of Renal (Kidney) issues

Final Report of Findings (1st July 2005)

This version replaces all previous interim reports

Background and aims

The provision of renal treatment within the United Kingdom depends upon political decisions within government, and the effect that opposition parties, together with other pressure groups, have upon government. It is therefore important for the National Kidney Federation (NKF) to ascertain the knowledge of renal matters that each party has, and the level to which each party supports the aims of the NKF in securing treatment and funding for its patient members. The NKF believes that the best time to survey party candidates is prior to polling day in a General Election when candidates were at their keenest to satisfy questions asked by their own electorates. Candidates who were unsure of the issues would seek the assistance of their party headquarters. This in turn would cause political parties to address the issues and form policy on them.

The NKF acts as secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group in the Palace of Westminster. Prior to the General Election this group had a total of 108 MP's and Lords as members of that group.

Methods

During late March and April 2005 the NKF printed 45,000 Survey forms - (Appendix-1) and posted three such forms to each of 15,000 kidney patients. The patients were requested in a covering letter to ascertain the three major parliamentary candidates within their own constituency and then send them a survey form. Candidates were asked to complete the survey and send it back to the patient. The patients were asked to forward replies to the NKF when received. The survey form asked a range of renal questions and made clear that the person requiring answers to the questions was an individual voter within the candidates constituency. With 650 constituencies, the maximum number of main party candidates was approximately 1950.

Variables

- It is not known how many of the 15,000 patients did as requested and sent out survey forms.
- It is not known how many survey forms each candidate received from patients within their constituency
- It is not known whether any party gave advice to candidates as to how the survey form should be answered – or whether it should be answered.
- Some candidates did not answer all the questions.
- Only some of the candidates surveyed were successful in the General Election and become Members of Parliament.

Results

The National Kidney Federation received a total of 968 unique replies (some candidates replied on several different forms but have only been counted as one). There were 473 replies from Labour, 272 replies from Conservative and 194 replies from Liberal democrats. Other parties contributed a further 29 replies.

The following tables show an analysis of the replies received :-

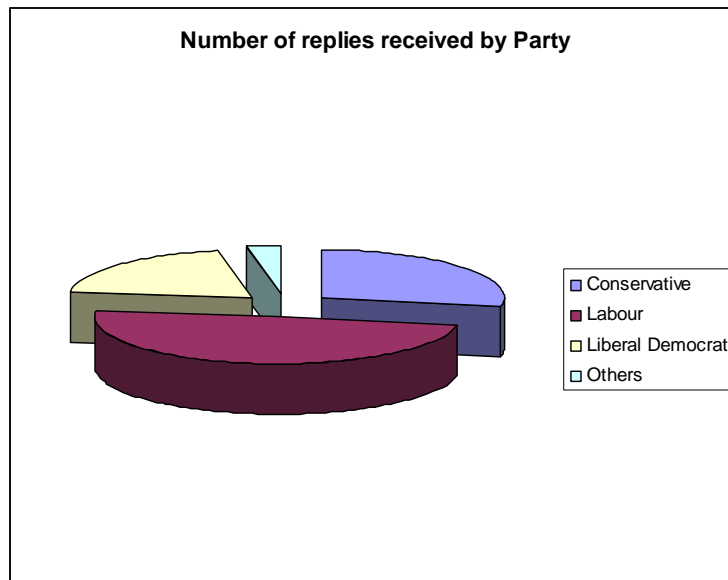
Yes =	Positive support for the topic
No =	Negative response for the topic
Other =	Narrative reply incapable of being captured as Yes or No
Empty =	The candidate did not reply to the question

Table of Answers

		Labour				Totals
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	139	0	40	294	473
Dialysis	2	134	0	42	297	473
Transplantation	3	130	0	46	297	473
Donor-relative signatures	4	84	0	39	350	473
Donor- Altruistic	5	87	0	38	348	473
Donor- Pooled	6	62	0	39	372	473
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	84	0	38	351	473
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	109	0	38	326	473
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	77	0	38	358	473
Join APPKG	10	108	10	56	299	473

		Conservative				Totals
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	91	0	99	82	272
Dialysis	2	98	0	90	84	272
Transplantation	3	92	0	95	85	272
Donor-relative signatures	4	57	1	95	119	272
Donor- Altruistic	5	52	2	96	122	272
Donor- Pooled	6	39	95	85	53	272
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	46	0	180	46	272
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	83	0	171	18	272
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	34	15	175	48	272
Join APPKG	10	88	7	173	4	272

		L/Dem				Totals
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	155	0	14	25	194
Dialysis	2	155	0	14	25	194
Transplantation	3	154	0	15	25	194
Donor-relative signatures	4	99	3	19	73	194
Donor- Altruistic	5	127	1	9	57	194
Donor- Pooled	6	116	1	10	67	194
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	125	1	9	59	194
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	136	1	10	47	194
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	125	2	11	56	194
Join APPKG	10	97	12	54	31	194

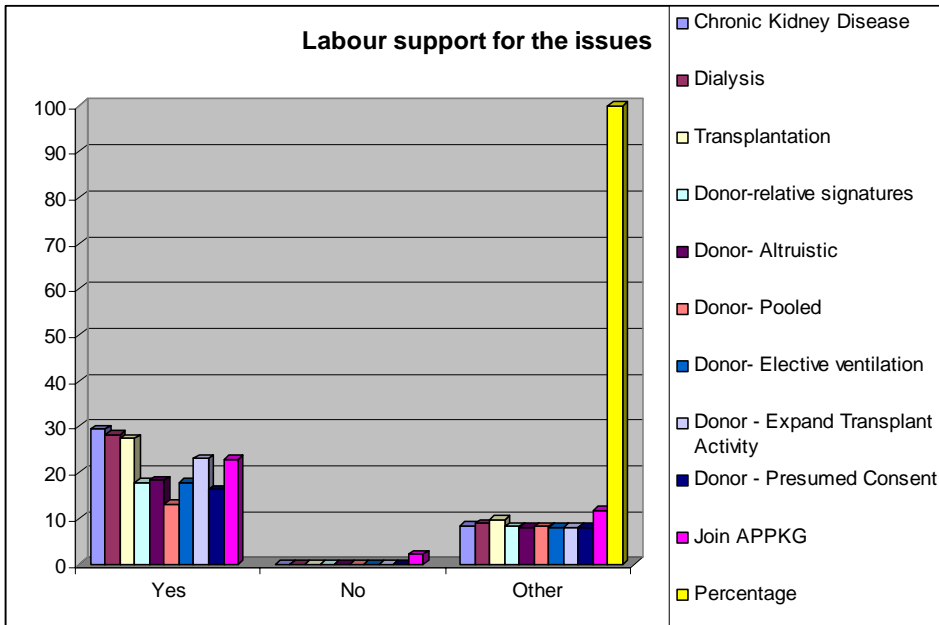


The Table of replies is now shown as a table of percentage support for each topic by Party

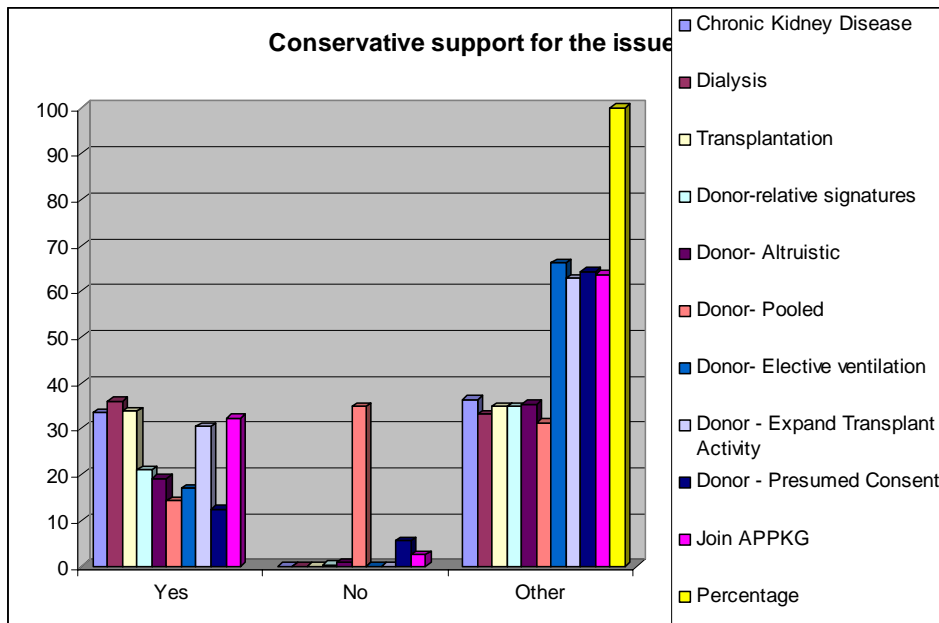
Table of Percentages

		Labour				%
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	29.39	0	8.46	62.16	100
Dialysis	2	28.33	0	8.88	62.79	100
Transplantation	3	27.48	0	9.73	62.79	100
Donor-relative signatures	4	17.76	0	8.25	73.4	100
Donor- Altruistic	5	18.39	0	8.03	73.57	100
Donor- Pooled	6	13.11	0	8.25	78.65	100
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	17.76	0	8.03	74.21	100
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	23.04	0	8.03	68.92	100
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	16.28	0	8.03	75.69	100
Join APPKG	10	22.83	2.11	11.84	63.21	100
		Conservative				
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	33.46	0	36.4	30.15	100
Dialysis	2	36.03	0	33.09	30.88	100
Transplantation	3	33.82	0	34.93	31.25	100
Donor-relative signatures	4	20.96	0.36	34.9	43.75	100
Donor- Altruistic	5	19.12	0.74	35.29	44.85	100
Donor- Pooled	6	14.34	34.93	31.25	19.49	100
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	16.91	0	66.18	16.91	100
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	30.51	0	62.87	6.62	100
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	12.5	5.51	64.34	17.65	100
Join APPKG	10	32.35	2.57	63.6	1.47	100
		L/Dem				
		Yes	No	Other	Empty	
Chronic Kidney Disease	1	79.9	0	7.22	12.89	100
Dialysis	2	79.9	0	7.22	12.89	100
Transplantation	3	79.38	0	7.73	12.89	100
Donor-relative signatures	4	51.03	1.55	9.79	37.63	100
Donor- Altruistic	5	65.46	0.52	4.64	29.38	100
Donor- Pooled	6	59.79	0.52	5.15	34.54	100
Donor- Elective ventilation	7	64.43	0.52	4.64	30.41	100
Donor - Expand Transplant Activity	8	70.1	0.52	5.15	24.23	100
Donor - Presumed Consent	9	64.43	1.03	5.67	28.87	100
Join APPKG	10	50	6.19	27.84	15.98	100

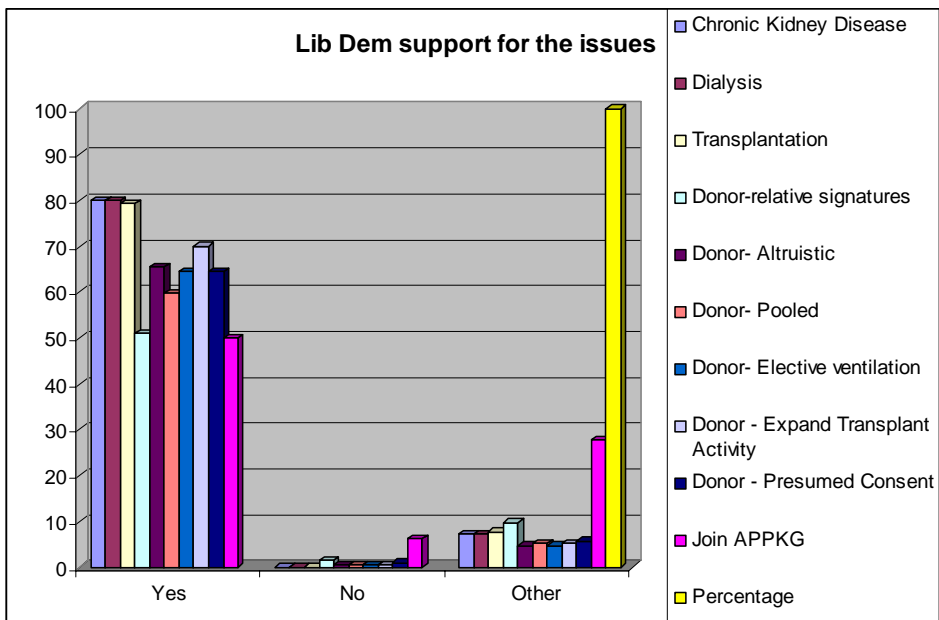
The following page shows how each party supported the ten issues



LAB

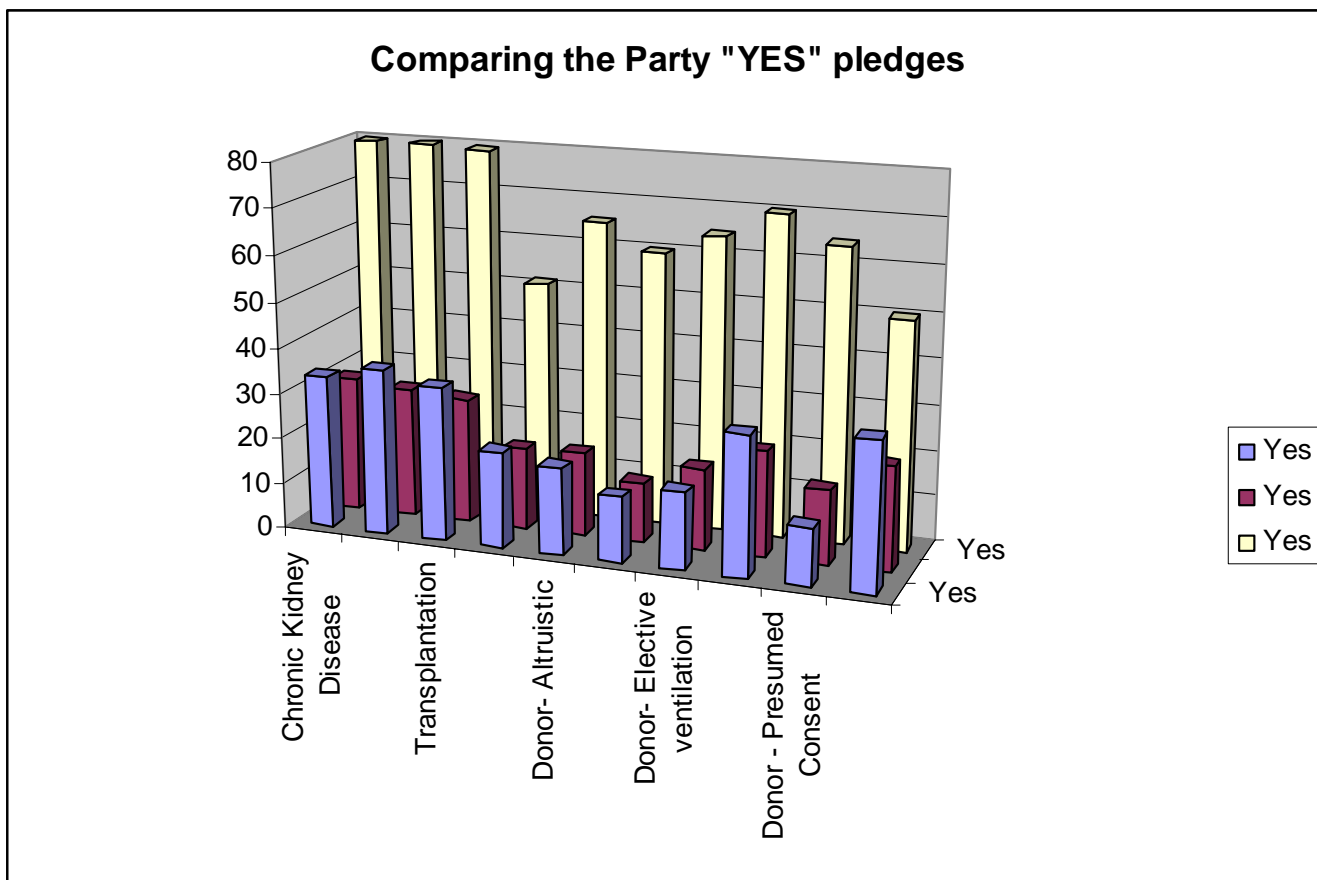


CON



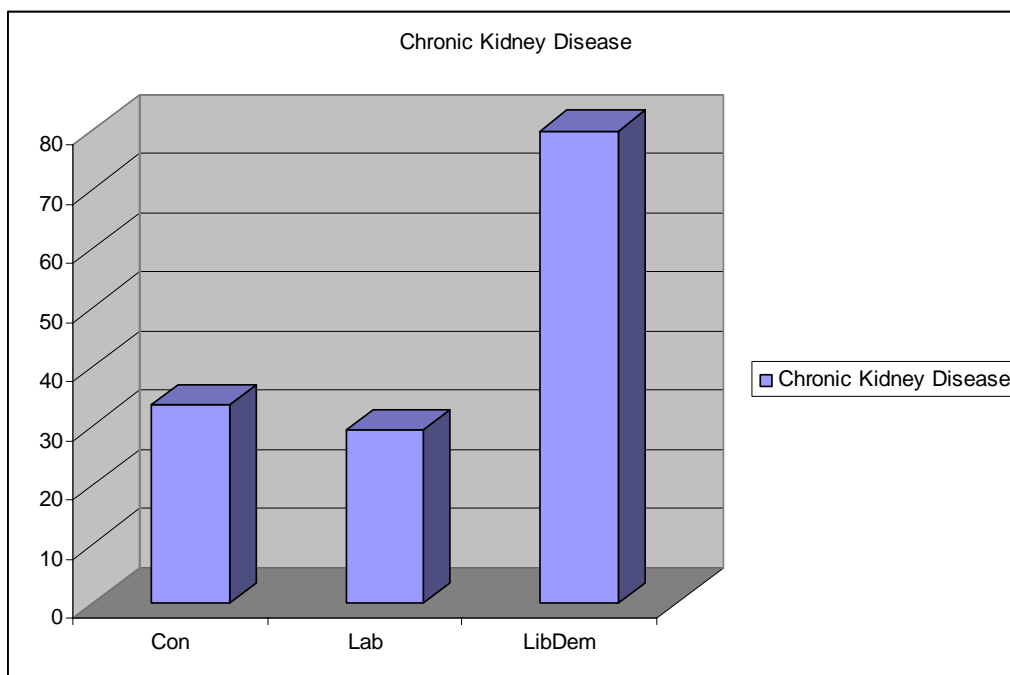
LIBDEM

The following pages compare the **positive** support pledged from each party issue by issue (support is shown as the number of **Yes** answers expressed as a **percentage** of the number of answers received from that party)



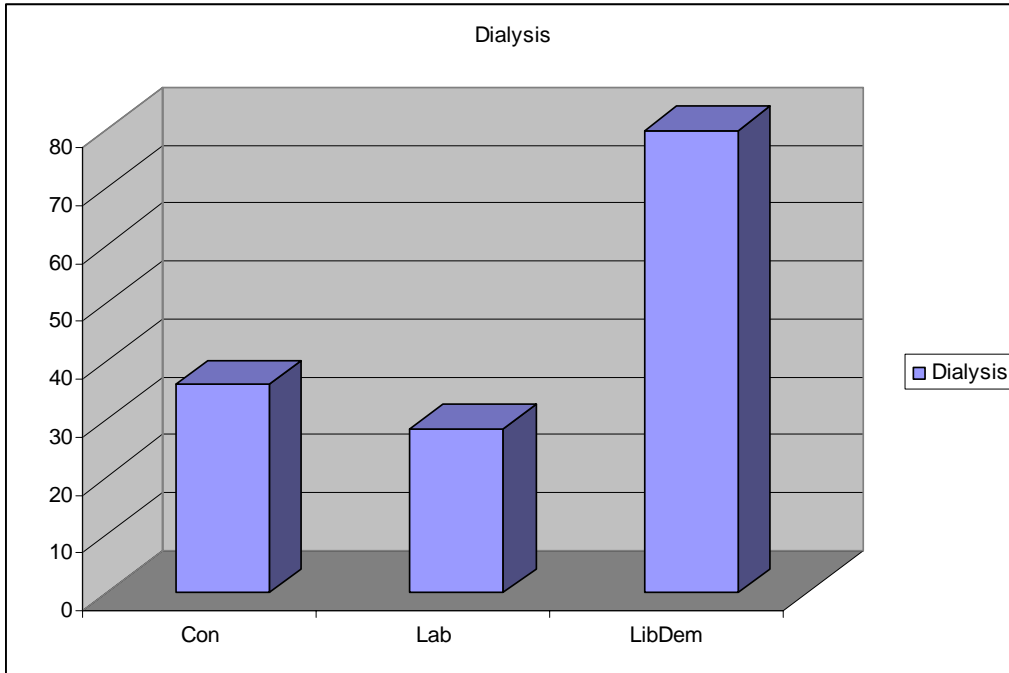
Question 1 - Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

5% of the population are thought to be suffering from some form of kidney disease. Do you support existing plans (Renal National Service Framework) to find these patients and treat these patients at General Practitioner (GP) local level, in order to prevent further deterioration of kidney function ?



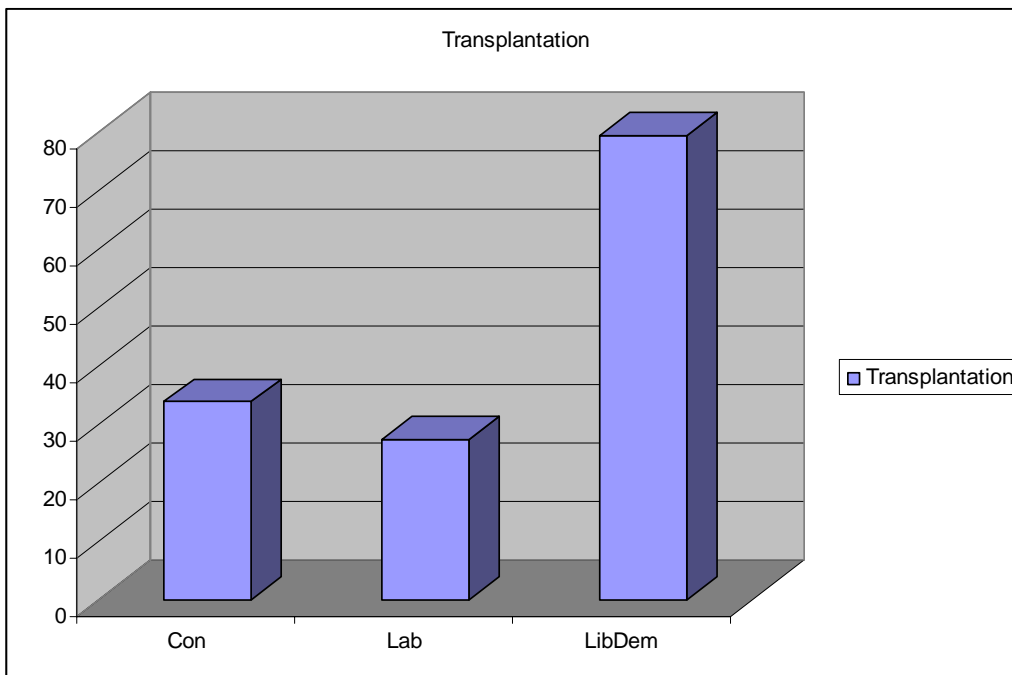
Question 2 - Dialysis for kidney Patients

Would you support an expansion of dialysis services to ensure that all patients who would benefit from dialysis are able to do so at a time and place convenient to them and with a full choice of suitable dialysis options available ?



Question 3 - Transplantation

Would you support an increase in transplantation, an increase in the numbers of transplant surgeons and staff, and resist the closure of Transplant centres ?

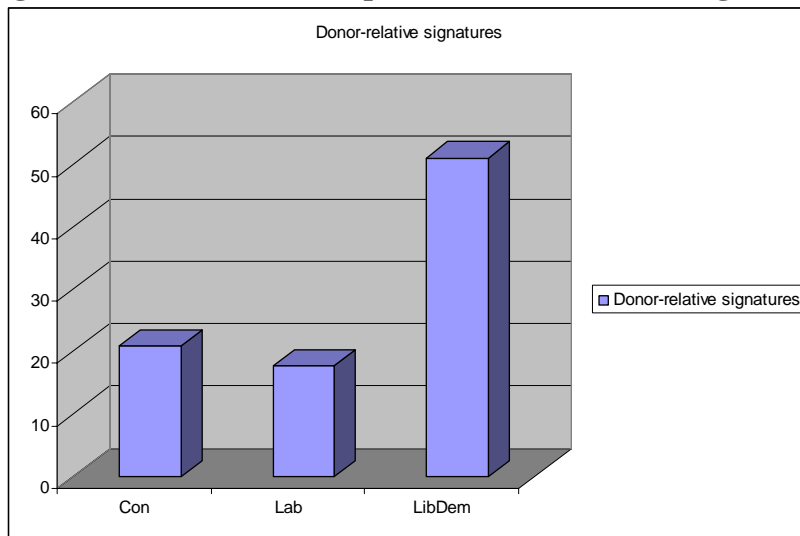


Question 4 – Organ Donors

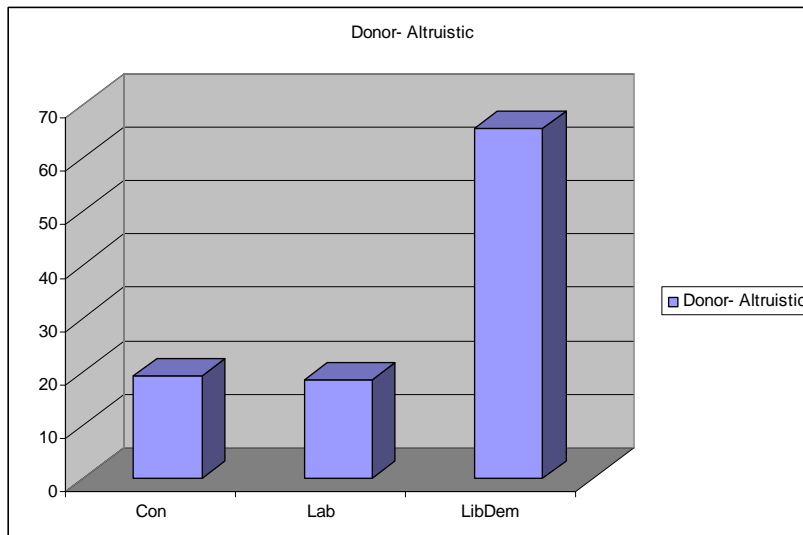
Which of the following initiatives to increase the availability of kidney organs for transplantation would you endorse ? (Altruistic and pooled donation has already been included in new legislation)

The following tables represent one subsection each of question 4 – all organ donor related

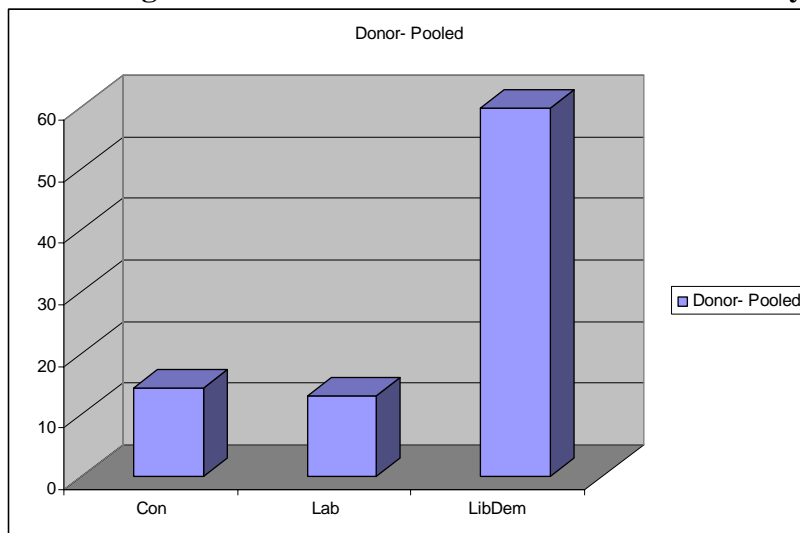
Enable relatives to sign donor cards as well as potential donors (encourages family discussion)



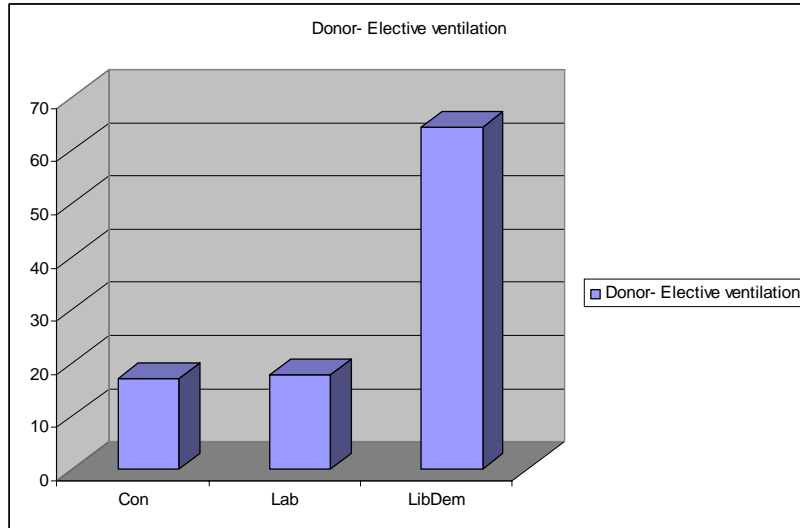
Allow altruistic donation between non-relatives when donor is not known to recipient



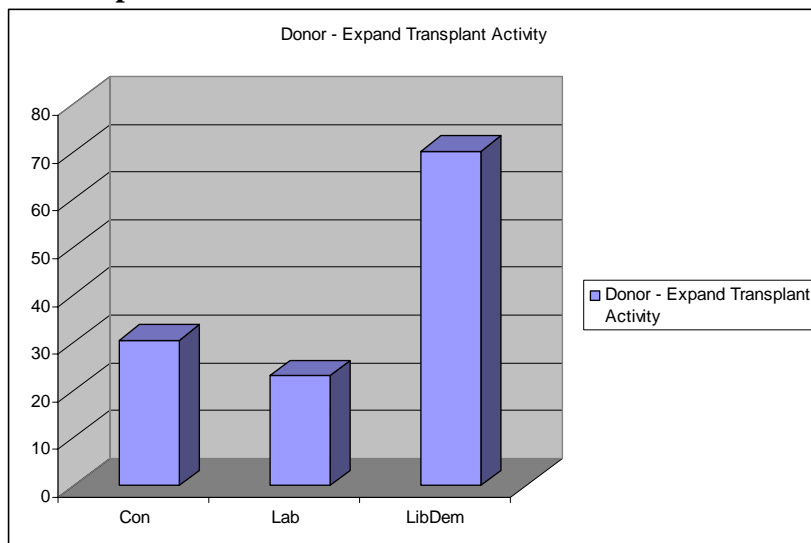
Allow pooled donation exchange between two or more “non-matched” tissue type couples



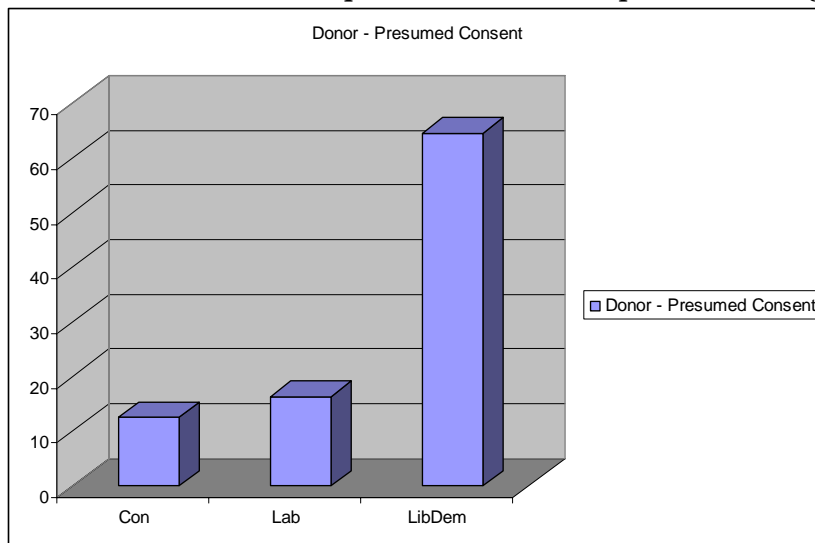
Permit elective ventilation and other clinical procedures to preserve organs prior to Transplant



Fund and expand the Transplant structure within the NHS

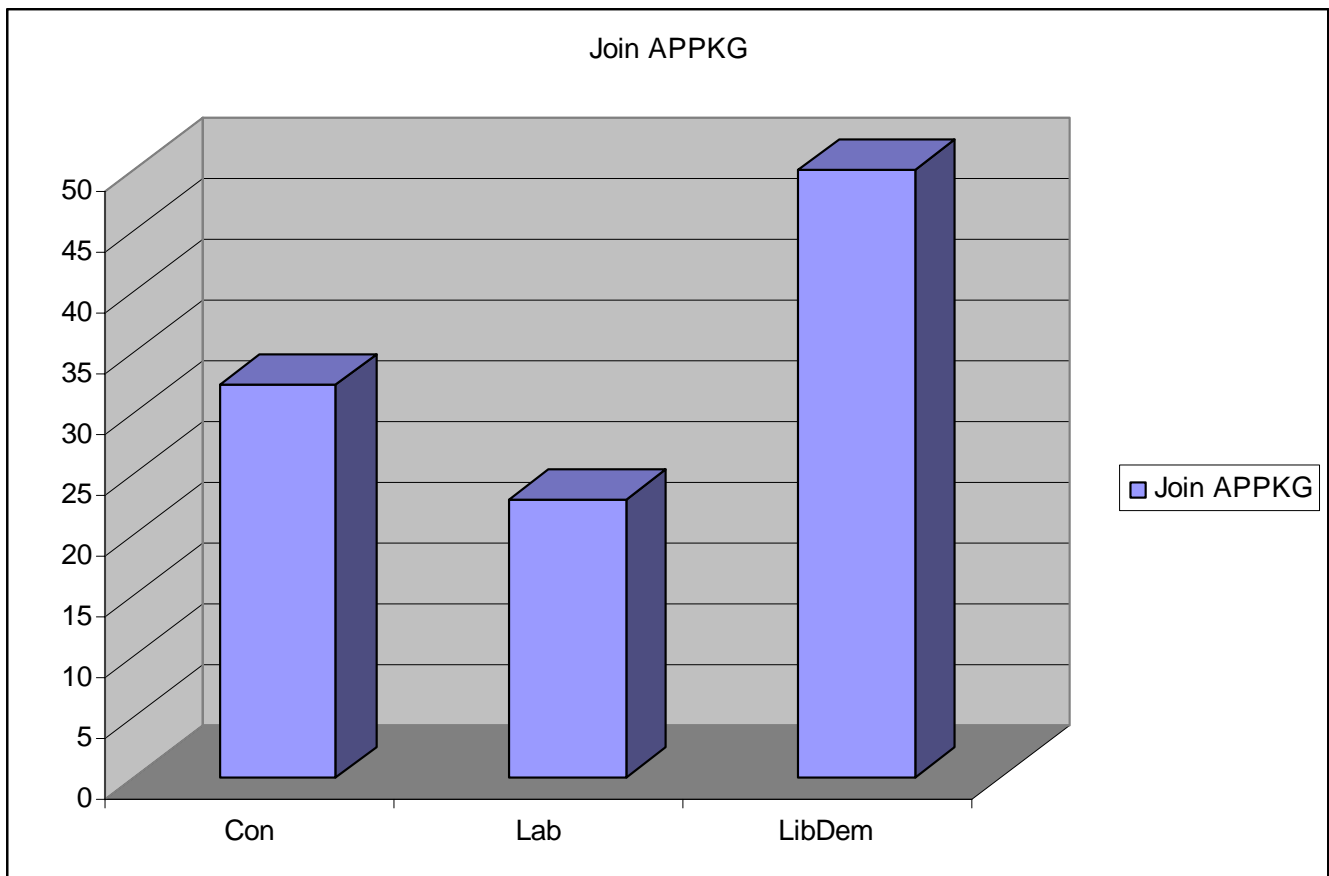


Support a change to "Presumed Consent". *Opt-out* rather than *Opt-in* to the organ donor register



Question 5 – The All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group of MP’s and Lords

If elected, would you become a member of the All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group (APPKG) (The group meets two or three times per year in the House of Commons and enables members to meet with renal specialists and patient members of the National Kidney Federation (NKF) to discuss any necessary parliamentary action)



All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group

The level of support shown for the work of the All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group is exceptionally high, with 302 candidates out of 968 replies received saying that they would join the group if elected.

In fact following this election membership of the group has risen from 108 to 174 (including 9 members of the House of Lords) .

Conclusion

The cost of conducting this survey to the charity (National Kidney Federation) was high (£7,000), yet it has provided invaluable information about the opinions of individual candidates (some of whom are now elected members) and the general levels of support by topic given by the political parties as a whole. The survey has also strengthened the membership of the All Party Parliamentary Kidney Group and raised the profile of renal disease amongst policy makers. It has been an outstanding success.

TFS

1st July 2005

National Kidney Federation
6 Stanley Street
Worksop
S81 7HX

Tel 01455 619128

I am a voter in your constituency, who has an interest in kidney disease and related renal matters. I would like to ask you to read the information in the box beneath, then answer the questions that follow overleaf. This is a short questionnaire, but the issues are vital to me. I would ask that you then return the form to me at the address shown in the box to the right of this paragraph. Thank you

Between 2-3,000,000 people in the UK, suffer from some form of Kidney Disease (CKD). There are 5 progressive stages of CKD. Stage 5 is End Stage Renal Failure (ESRF). ESRF patients number 40,000 but the number will double within 10 years. ESRF patients cannot live without either Dialysis (three days a week for life), or a Transplant.

Dialysis conducted in renal units is overstretched and patients are being turned away. Those patients who are treated are denied basic human rights, such as the choice of available treatment options, and freedom to travel within the country away from their base renal unit. This can prevent a patient working, taking a holiday or visiting relatives.

Transplantation is the “gold standard” treatment, but only 5 kidneys are transplanted a day on average. Of the 20,000 dialysis patients, only 5,500 have been placed on the Transplant waiting list and 400 of these die each year whilst waiting. There is a shortage of organs, transplant surgeons, operating theatre time, and theatre staff. There is an absence of transplantation culture in NHS hospitals. **Transplantation is a more cost effective treatment than dialysis.**

Transplanted kidney organs may be cadaveric (from the deceased) or living (from friends or relatives). Relatives refusing permission even though the deceased donor joined the national organ donor register or carried a donor card prevent 42% of cadaver donations. Because we have 2 kidneys but can live normally with 1, living donation is possible and indeed very successful. Currently, strangers may not donate live organs altruistically, although we expect this to change with new legislation. On an average day in the United Kingdom 1500 people die. That means each day 3000 potentially life saving kidneys are either cremated or buried.

Other European countries have more successful transplant programmes than the UK and Spain has been so successful that they no longer have a waiting list.

*Information taken from the kidney patients' charity
The National Kidney Federation -Charity Number 1106735
www.kidney.org.uk*

**Please answer the questions shown overleaf
so that I might understand your views on these matters.**

**Don't forget to add your name, Constituency and Party at the bottom of the next page
PTO**

