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To All Trust Chief Executives

Organ Donation Taskforce – ‘Organs for Transplants’ Implementation of the Organ Donation Taskforce Recommendations

I am writing to alert you to wide reaching action on organ donation. On 16 January 2008, UK Health Ministers accepted the 14 recommendations of the Organ Donation Taskforce to improve organ donor rates. The expectation is a 50% increase in organ donation rates in the UK within five years – resulting in an additional 1200 organs a year and significant clinical and cost effectiveness benefits. The full report can be found at www.dh.gov.uk – *Organs for Transplants. A Report from the Organ Donation Taskforce.*

The Taskforce recommendations focus on the need to invest significantly in the infrastructure of organ donation. They include the need for a UK Wide organ donor organisation established as part of NHS Blood and Transplant; a strengthened network of dedicated Organ Retrieval Teams working with critical care teams in hospital to procure organs for transplant; a doubling of the number of front line donor coordinators - about an extra 100 donor transplant coordinators - and the need to make organ donation a usual rather than unusual event supported by additional staff training and a monitoring of donation activity in all Trusts. Additional funding of

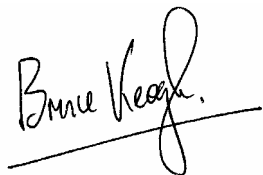
£11m has been made available for 2008/09 with further funding agreed for subsequent years.

I will oversee implementation of the Taskforce recommendations and I am delighted that Mr Chris Rudge, Medical and Transplant Director of NHS Blood and Transplant, will be joining the Department of Health on secondment as National Clinical Director for Transplant to lead the day-to-day implementation.

I know that many of you are keen to start to support implementation of these recommendations. However, action will require careful planning, prioritising and co-ordination. Some changes can be made quite rapidly, but full implementation may take up to three years. We are therefore drawing up robust implementation plans, which will be made available shortly.

I very much look forward to being part of this and overseeing what will be a very exciting time in organ donation and transplantation in the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Keogh". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Professor Sir Bruce Keogh
NHS Medical Director