



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **NSW GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES AUSTRALIAN TRANSPLANT GAMES**

The spirit and tenacity of organ recipients was on show today at NSW Parliament House with the launch of the Australian Transplant Games, the Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, Jillian Skinner, said.

The Australian Transplant Games are held every two years and this year Newcastle will be hosting the event from September 29 to October 6.

“The NSW Government is proud to support the Australian Transplant Games, which give organ recipients a platform to celebrate their health and well-being,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The Australian Transplant Games celebrate the life that has been given through organ and tissue donation and importantly encourage the wider community to talk about the donation of organs.

“Sport gives organ recipients a rewarding opportunity to showcase their health and fitness while giving thanks to donor families, living donors and clinicians.

“As Minister for Health, I am committed to increasing organ donation rates in this state and I encourage all families to take an interest in the Australian Transplant Games and discuss organ donation with each other.

“To me, nothing is more truly a reflection of our shared humanity than when we take steps to save another person’s life – even more so when that person may well be a total stranger. Donating tissues and organs saves lives; it’s as simple as that.

“It is for this reason that in August, I announced the *Increasing Organ Donation in NSW: Government Plan 2012*, which, among other initiatives, will transfer existing donors from the state Roads and Maritime Services organ donor register to the national Australian Organ Donor Register run by Medicare.”

Minister Skinner today invited all Members of Parliament to sign up to the Australian Organ Donor Register.

“Using Parliament House as a venue for political leaders and senior public officials to sign up to the national register signifies the importance we place on registering to be organ donors and of having the conversation with family members and others to make sure they know our wishes.”

The NSW Government is a major sponsor of the Australian Transplant Games.

The Member for Newcastle, Tim Owen, welcomed the launch of the Games saying his local community is looking forward to welcoming organ recipient athletes.

“The Australian Transplant Games will offer some 24 events and athletes are expected to attend from across Australia and from overseas,” Mr Owen said.

“I’m sure many more families in my electorate and across NSW will be having a conversation about organ donation as a result of the Games.”

Chris Thomas, CEO of Transplant Australia, said that the Games provide an opportunity to boost NSW’s donation rates.

“While donation rates in Australia are on the rise, greater focus needs to be placed in NSW and Transplant Australia is pleased to support the NSW Government’s plan to eventually double organ donation rates in this state,” Mr Thomas said.

“The Australian Transplant Games give us the opportunity to engage with the NSW public and demonstrate the ‘living proof’ of the success of organ donation.”

For more information about the Australian Transplant Games visit [www.australiantransplantgames.com](http://www.australiantransplantgames.com)

To sign up to the Australian Organ Donor Register visit [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/patients/aodr/](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/patients/aodr/)

**MEDIA: Samantha Day – 0417 617 056**