

Routine discussion of corneal donation amongst eligible in-patients in whom death is expected

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Project Aims

- There is a national shortage of approximately 500 corneas per year that would be used for sight-restoring transplants¹
- 51% of the UK adult population state that they would definitely be willing to donate some or all of their organs when they die² and evidence shows that it can bring great comfort to bereaved families
- However there are no national processes in place to give patients the opportunity to donate corneas; the process relies on health professionals to raise the topic with patients and NICE guidelines state that organ donation should be considered as a usual part of end-of-life care planning³
- Donation rate is extremely low at PCH (2 donations in 2 years, compared to a possible 87 per year when compared to other trusts)
- Baseline audit showed 40% of patients dying on the PCP were eligible to donate corneas, but there were 0 documented discussions about the possibility of donation and 0 donations over this time
- This project aims to increase the number of routine discussions about cornea donation with patients who are dying, and ultimately to increase the number of corneas being donated, from PCH.

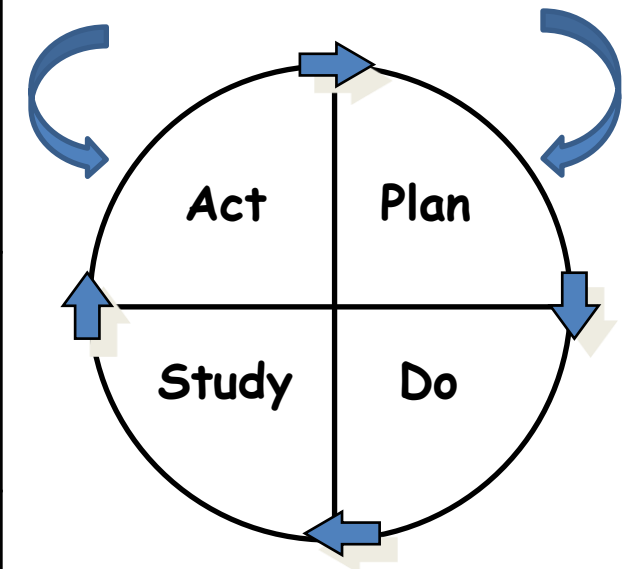
1. Data: NHS Blood and Transplant

2. NHSBT Research *Understanding current attitudes and behaviours towards organ donation*, August 2013

3. NICE guidelines CG135: Organ Donation for Transplantation (Dec 2011)

Action Planning

What are we trying to accomplish?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase the number of documented discussions about cornea donation with patients who are dying2. Increase the number of corneas donated from PCH
How will we know that a change is an improvement?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Audit of PCP paperwork to measure number of documented discussions2. Records of cornea donations from mortuary
What changes can we make that will result in improvement?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Education programme for medical and nursing staff2. Written information for patients to facilitate discussions3. Easy access to information for clinical and nursing staff4. Aide-memoirs to encourage more conversations



Driver Diagram

GIVING DYING PATIENTS INFORMATION ABOUT CORNEA DONATION: FACTORS AT PLAY

Identified barriers include: lack of essential knowledge, low levels of training, fear of distressing patients and families¹

Primary Drivers

EDUCATION

INFORMATION
AVAILABILITY

MEMORY AID

DOCUMENTATION

Secondary Drivers

Doctors knowledge and
confidence to have
discussions

Intranet

PCP paperwork

PCP paperwork

Nurses knowledge and
confidence

Information on wards

Visible prompts on
wards

1. Gillon S, Hurlow A, Rayment C et al. Obstacles to corneal donation amongst hospice inpatients: A questionnaire survey of multi-disciplinary team member's attitudes, knowledge, practice and experience. *Palliat Med* 2012; 26: 939-946

PDSA cycles

PLAN: Baseline audit to establish the number of patients eligible for cornea donation and the number of documented discussions about cornea donation over a 3 month period prior to any interventions.

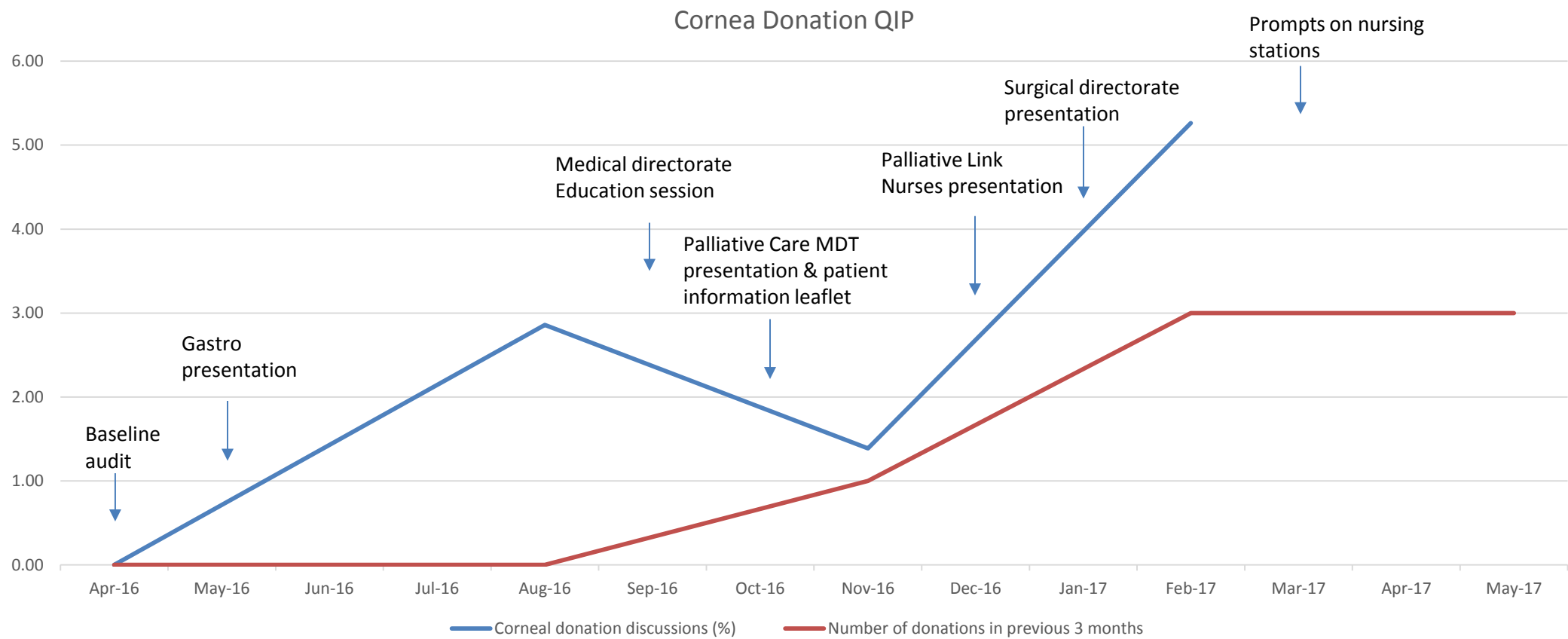
DO: Education programme for medical doctors (PDSA cycle 1)

STUDY: Thereafter to audit the paperwork of all patients placed on the PCP over a 1 month period, every 3 months, to measure the number of documented discussions about cornea donation following interventions and to contact the mortuary to measure the number of corneas donated in the previous 3 month period

The planned change will have made a difference if the number of documented discussions and the rate of cornea donation increase

ACT: Changes for subsequent PDSA cycles:
Information leaflet- design, publish and make available on the intranet (Cycle 2)
Presentation at Palliative Care MDT (Cycle 2)
Presentation for nursing staff at Palliative Link Nurse training day (Cycle 3)
Presentation for Surgical staff (Cycle 3)
Aide-Memoirs on ward nursing stations (Cycle 4)

Runchart



Prompts on nursing stations

CORNEAL DONATION- THE GIFT OF SIGHT

- Does your patient carry an organ donation card?
- Please ask patients who are on the PCP or their relatives if they would like information about donating corneas after death
- Information leaflets for patients and professionals are available in the patient leaflet library on the intranet (search for cornea donation) or at:
- **<http://spsweb:12000/sites/PatientLeaflets/Documents/SUR233 - Cornea Donation.pdf>**
- To refer to Tissue Services please phone **0800 432 0559 as soon as possible** after death
- A specialist nurse will return the call & ask for the patient's medical history
- Tissue services will organise everything else including gaining consent from the relatives
- Any questions or for more information please contact the SNOD or visit www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissuedonation

What difference has been made?

- Although the actual numbers have been small, the changes have resulted in both increased numbers of documented discussions and numbers of donations
- Documented discussion rate of cornea donation with patients on the PCP has risen from 0% to 5% (0 per month to 4 per month)
- The cornea donation rate has increased from 2 in 2 years before starting this project to 7 in the last 7 months (ie from an average of 1 per year to 1 per month)
- A very small increase in documented discussions has resulted in a very significant rise in donation rate- imagine what could be achieved if more of us incorporated this into routine end of life care!

Next Steps

- Ongoing liaison with mortuary to ensure that donations actually take place
- Presentation of completed QIP to both the medical staff and Palliative Care MDT at PCH, to serve as both an encouragement and a reminder to continue offering information about cornea donation when discussing choices around end of life care
- Handover to the PCH Organ Donation Committee and Ophthalmology Consultant to continue the project after I have left
- Ongoing liaison with NHSBT to increase publicity, including posters on the wards, to prompt patients to raise the topic themselves
- Dedicated information page on PCH website

Team Members

- Emma Tregenna (CT2): Project Design and Lead
- Kamila Wilczynska (FY1): Data collection and presentation to surgical team

“On these spring days, it’s lovely to think that someone else is seeing the world because of what he gave.”

Letter from a patient’s wife



14 sight-restoring corneas since the project began (7 donations)