

Living kidney donors to get expenses reimbursed

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People who donate their kidneys while alive are to get out-of-pocket expenses paid back in a scheme to encourage more organ donation.

The [Department of Social Protection](#) has agreed to continue payments to living kidney donors during the period of donation and recuperation, according to a briefing note prepared for Minister for Health [Leo Varadkar](#).

It says the removal of financial disincentives would potentially increase the number of living donors. “It is generally accepted that living kidney donors should not be unduly burdened with the financial costs associated with donation. Several countries currently provide reimbursement of non-medical expenses associated with donation.”

Although the briefing note says the policy would go to Mr Varadkar “shortly” for approval and would start at the beginning of September, the deadline was not met.

Organ Donation and Transplant Ireland director Dr [Jim Egan](#) said good progress had been made on the policy and it would be ready soon. A fine balance has to be struck between covering legitimate expenses and not “incentivising” people to donate organs, he said.

Last year, there were 294 transplants, of which 185 were kidney transplants. The organs came from 86 deceased and 38 living donors. The number of living donors is up from two in 2005, when the practice began.

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