

Historically Australia and New Zealand were predominantly Christian societies. However, due to multicultural evolution, this proportion has decreased to approximately 50% in both countries (with 30% identifying as 'no religion').

While it is best not to make assumptions about an individual's or his or her family's religious views or practices, it may be useful to be aware of the stated positions of religious leaders and organisations on organ donation. These are outlined below for some religious groups.

Consumer brochures (in English), translated versions of the brochures and more detailed information are available on the DonateLife [website](#). The following provides a summary of the information available.

#### *Catholicism*

Organ and tissue transplants are hailed by the Church as a great service to life. One way of nurturing a culture of life is through a willingness to donate organs and tissues with a view to offering a chance of health and even life itself to people who are sick.

#### *Islam*

The Muslim faith values saving a life very highly. It accepts organ donation after death to save a life. This is seen as an act of merit and in certain circumstances may be an obligation.

#### *Buddhism*

Buddhism, with its many diverse traditions and cultures, does not have a unified view on all issues. However, most Buddhists are supportive of organ and tissue donation. This is underpinned by a commitment to the teachings of the Buddha to always show compassion, and endeavour to relieve suffering for all living beings. Ultimately, the rights of individual Buddhists to make their own decision on organ donation would always be respected.

The death process of an individual is viewed as very important, and a body should be treated with respect. However, there are no beliefs that say the body should be preserved in its entirety, so removing organs is acceptable. A dead body, however, should only be disturbed for appropriate reasons, and with special care.

#### *Hinduism*

Hindus believe that the physical body is mortal and perishable while the soul is immortal and imperishable. In none of the Hindu sacred texts is there any explicit prohibition against organ donation. All Hindu sacred texts promote the virtues of truth, honesty and living simply, but also of selfless giving — daana. Thus, Hindu values totally conform with organ and tissue donation.

#### *Judaism*

Judaism maintains and teaches that life and every moment of life is of infinite value. Therefore, organ donation in order to save life is considered a divine ordinance (mitzvah). However, it equally follows that Judaism insists that transplants can only take place in an appropriately supervised environment ensuring the donor has been declared deceased in accordance with Jewish Law.

#### *Greek Orthodox*

The Greek Orthodox Church supports organ donation as a selfless act of giving. Human life can be bettered through donation and transplantation while preserving the sanctity of life.