# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Implementation of SaBTO FAIR III recommendations changing MSM questions to donations of tissues and cells** |
| **DATE** | **18 September 2023** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Today, I have agreed to accept and implement the recommendations made by the For the Assessment of Individualised Risk (FAIR) steering group, along with the Advisory Committee of the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO), to remove MSM (men who have sex with men) questions across risk assessments for living and deceased tissue and cell donations.

On 14 December 2020, the former Health Minister Vaughan Gething announced that Wales had agreed to lift the restrictions which had prevented MSM donating blood. I am pleased to announce the implementation of the FAIR III recommendations will extend this to tissue and cell donations.

These new recommendations will change the questions asked to MSM donors and MSM partner donors to a gender-neutral risk-based approach and will create a more inclusive donation process within Wales.

I have instructed NHS Blood and Transplant, the Welsh Blood Service and other organisations in Wales, which are involved with donation and transplant, to prepare and make changes to the questions asked during tissue and cell donation processes to move to a more individualised assessment of whether donors may be at risk of a blood-borne virus infection, regardless of their sex, gender or sexual orientation.

The changes will ensure a fairer and more up to date assessment of risk is applied to all donors.

I expect these changes to be introduced as soon as possible within organisations’ abilities.