

**Human Tissue Authority**  
151 Buckingham Palace Road  
London  
SW1W 9SZ

██████████  
By email to ██████████

**Tel** 020 7269 1900  
**Web** [www.hta.gov.uk](http://www.hta.gov.uk)  
**Email** [enquiries@hta.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@hta.gov.uk)  
**Date** 15 February 2018

Dear ██████████

### **Freedom of Information request**

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which was received by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) on 29 January 2018. Your email outlined the following request:

I contacted you in late 2015 to ask about the influence of the Church in your organisation. At the time you informed me the Church exerted no authority over HTA. Since then you have appointed the Bishop of Worcester as Head of HTA. Can you inform me as to how many church officials now work as representatives of HTA now?

### **Response**

The Bishop of Dudley was appointed as a Member of the Authority in March 2016.

The Members of the Authority act as the HTA's board. In addition to their strategic input into how the HTA operates, Members of the Authority also act as panel members for certain decisions on living organ donation. There are twelve lay and professional Members appointed by the Government. More details on our executive team and the current HTA Authority Members can be found on the HTA's website [here](#).

Currently 19 out of 128 of the HTA's Independent Assessors (IAs) hold chaplaincy roles.

IAs are trained and accredited by the HTA as part of its role in regulating living organ donation; they are not employed by the HTA. IAs are professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds (including Clinicians, Nurses, Hospital Chaplains). They are independent of the transplant unit at the hospitals and are trained by the HTA to interview donors (and recipients in cases of directed donation) and submit a report of their interviews to the HTA.

The IA system ensures that each individual donor has an opportunity to speak freely to someone not connected with the transplant unit in order to confirm that:

- the donor has the capacity to make an informed decision;
- there has been no reward sought or offered for the organ donation;
- their wish to donate is free from any pressure to act against their will;
- they understand the nature of the procedure and risks of the surgery.

### **Further information**

If you are unhappy with the way the HTA has handled your request for information in this case, you may in the first instance ask us for an internal review by writing to us at the above postal or email address.

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have the right to appeal directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision, at the address below. There is no charge for making an appeal.

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45

Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

