



Dear Supporter

“On 28 March 2018 I celebrated 22 years of my kidney and pancreas transplant at Westmead. I’m very grateful to my donor family and all the wonderful researchers and medical staff at Westmead... loving life.” Jeni Winkels



Jeni and Oliver Winkels

Thanks to the kidney and pancreas transplantation treatment, since 1987 the lives of more than 500 patients have been saved at Westmead Hospital. Jeni Winkels is one of them.

Westmead was the first hospital in Australia to offer a pancreas transplantation. Since then, patients with severe type one diabetes and end-stage kidney failure have been fortunate to receive the revolutionary treatment.

When Jeni was 10, she was struggling to eat, and she was feeling more thirsty than normal. Her mum gave her some appetite tonic and when symptoms persisted they went to see the doctor. She was immediately diagnosed with type one diabetes and sent to an intensive care unit. Then her journey with insulin therapy and blood sugar monitoring commenced.

Did you know?

Jeni was the 69th patient in Australia to receive the pancreas-kidney transplant.

“We often call other organ recipients by their number as patients. I’m a friend of No. 34. We are like a big family,” Jeni said.

The simultaneous-transplant unit at Westmead has saved and changed the lives of patients with insulin-dependent type one diabetes, having an additional positive effect on their loved ones.

With dedicated donors like you, we can continue to support the delivery of our mission, providing more than one million patients a year with access to the best possible treatment and care. Please make a [gift](#) today or donate your preferred amount.

For several years, Jeni managed her condition well. At the age of 16, she developed an intolerance to insulin and for the next 15 years she was constantly in and out of hospital and her quality of life deteriorated severely, often with episodes of unconsciousness.

In 1996 she received a phone call with the news that changed her life forever. After being on a waiting list she would be the recipient of a pancreas-kidney transplant.

“At the time I had mixed feelings, but mostly sadness because I knew that having a generous organ donor meant that a family had lost someone, and they were probably going through a lot of pain,” Jeni said.

Her successful extensive operation was led by Professor Richard Allen. From day one, Jeni started to notice the difference. Symptoms like nausea and vomit disappeared, she no longer needed insulin and she had more energy.

Today, Jeni has regular examinations at Westmead Hospital with renal physician and the world’s top expert in kidney transplantation, Professor Jeremy Chapman.

During one of these visits, Jeni discovered she had thyroid cancer. Thanks to early detection, expert referral, and the collaboration of the medical staff at Westmead, Jeni’s tumour was removed. She is perfectly fine.

Jeni was fortunate to get an organ donor. She cannot thank enough the family of the person who 22 years ago gave her the gift of a second chance and a better life.

“Without the transplant I wouldn’t be here. My quality of life has improved so much that I can now do all the things I enjoy the most like dancing and travelling.”

Jeni had the opportunity to meet her donor’s mum, who was guest of honour at Jeni’s wedding 10 years ago. A trip to Africa – a continent Jeni is passionate about – will mark the celebration of Jeni and Oliver’s wedding anniversary.

“Since the transplant, and after all these years I feel great. My pancreas keeps functioning perfectly. I had to have my kidney replaced three years ago with another successful operation,” Jeni said.

Oliver incidentally donated one of his kidneys in the pairing program at Westmead. He was not a matching donor for Jeni, but he was happy to save someone else’s life. “I feel that by helping a patient with renal failure to avoid regular dialysis visits, I am supporting Jeni and giving back,” Oliver said.

Jeni’s story provides you with an insight into the wonderful power of your gifts at work. We are striving to work together in a global fight to beat diabetes and achieve much more.

By making your [gift](#) right now, you can help to transform the lives of our one million patients who turn to Westmead every year.

With my sincere thanks,

Joe Conneely
Head of Development

P.S. Please make your [gift](#) today and help us to save the lives of more people like Jeni. Donations of \$2 or more made by 30 June can be claimed on this year’s tax return.



Jeni Winkels

“I simply describe the treatment and care I have received from Westmead doctors and medical staff as the best.

I am so glad to have the renal team at Westmead Hospital looking after me – they answer any question I might have.”