



Message of Support from Simon Harris T.D., Minister for Health, to the Irish Team travelling to Vantaa, Finland for the 9th European Transplant & Dialysis Sports Championships

As you prepare to travel to Vantaa to take part in the 9th European Transplant & Dialysis Sports Championships, I wish you every success at the event.

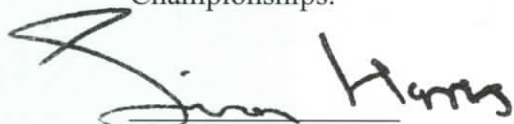
Your participation at the Championships is truly an inspiration to people who are undergoing kidney dialysis or waiting for a transplant. Those of you who are organ transplant recipients clearly illustrate the level of health and vitality that can be achieved after transplantation. For those on dialysis, I applaud your positive approach and I am sure that the experience will help you in dealing with your health challenges.

The Championships offer opportunities to recipients and supporters from the participating countries to meet, to exchange experiences, to compete against each other, to acknowledge each other's victories and to win just by competing. The whole concept of the Championships, and your participation in the event, clearly illustrates the importance of transplantation in the lives of many – it truly is a gift of life.

The Games are also a way of acknowledging donors and their families, as well as the medical staff, who have given you, as organ recipients, a second chance at life. Your commitment to fitness, and your appreciation of that second chance, can only be a consolation to donor families.

In my new role as Minister for Health, I am committed to increasing organ donation and transplantation rates to the benefit of patients and their families.

I wish you the best of luck in your events and hope that you all enjoy the Championships.



Simon Harris, T.D.
Minister for Health