Tissue Donation and Transplantation Education

1. DONOR DESIGNATION
When you designate your wishes on your driver’s license, advanced directive, state ID, or donor registry, you are authorizing donation to occur after your death.
The donation agencies, in collaboration with the hospital care team, will work with the donor family to honor their loved one’s wishes. Designating your wishes to be a donor is a personal choice and one that cannot be overridden by your family.

3. DONATION OPPORTUNITIES ASSESSED
The donation agencies rely on you to assist with an assessment to help determine donation suitability. You are the eyes of the donation agency so every detail you can provide is helpful. The best way you can prepare is to have access to the patient’s medical record while you’re making the call.

5. COOLING MAINTAINS THE OPPORTUNITY
Once death occurs, the cells in the body start to break down. Cooling slows that process and extends the time to allow donation to happen.
Cooling must occur prior to 12 hours from the time of death. The donation agencies will work with you to ensure the patient is cooled within the needed time frame.
If your organization does not have a cooled morgue, you will be asked to cool the patient with ice. The donation coordinator will provide instructions for icing and you can also scan this code to watch an instructional cooling video.

6. TISSUE RECOVERY
The tissue recovery team is comprised of highly skilled recovery technicians who are committed to the highest level of care and respect for patients and families. They will coordinate logistics with the hospital, funeral home, medical examiner and others for the timing of the recovery.
The team is self-contained and brings everything for the recovery and reconstruction to your operating room.

7. TISSUE GIFTS
One tissue donation can give life to 60 people and sometimes more depending on the number of grafts recovered and how they are processed.
Tissue donation is a gift of life—a gift that allows recipients to move without pain, to play with their children and grandchildren, and to participate in activities they thought were lost forever.

2. TRIGGERS FOR DONATION REFERRALS
• Call 1.800.24.SHARE when your patient meets the criteria.
• Every death must be referred, regardless of age or cause of death.
• Hospital policy designates that the call is made within one hour of time of death.

4. THE DONATION DISCUSSION
The donation coordinator will work with you to find the best time to talk with families about donation. Often times this conversation occurs after the family has returned home. Please obtain telephone numbers where the family can be reached and share that with the donation agency.
The donation coordinator will speak with the patient’s family, offer condolences, and provide an overview of the opportunities to help others through tissue and eye donation.
Every patient and patient’s family is given the same opportunity and all are treated with the same discretion and sensitivity. Never pre-determine donation on the basis of the patient’s/family’s circumstances, race, beliefs, grief or religion.

8. LIFE-LONG HOPE AND HEALING
The care and support a family receives while in the hospital continues indefinitely.
Families receive an outcome letter in the mail which provides information about their loved one’s gifts and also receive a handmade wrap in the mail within about a week of their loved one’s death.
Additional grief resources and invitations to special donor family events allow families to share their journey with others traveling a similar path.