



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Media contact: Kerry O'Connor (816) 932-8646, pager (816) 440-0001

Saint Luke's recognized nationally for high organ donation rates

Award for success in increasing the number of organs available for transplantation

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Saint Luke's Hospital was presented an award by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for its success in increasing the number of organs available for transplantation. This is the fifth consecutive year that Saint Luke's Hospital has achieved the Medal of Honor.

Hospital executives, together with their partners in all 58 federally designated organ procurement organizations (OPOs), received the Department's Medal of Honor for Organ Donation for achieving and sustaining national goals for donation, including a donation rate of 75 percent or more of eligible donors at their facilities. They were recognized at the Fifth National Learning Congress for the Donation and Transplantation Community of Practice held in Grapevine, Texas, from Sept. 30 to Oct. 1.

"These hospitals have made incredible progress in increasing the number of organs available for transplantation," said Mary K. Wakefield, Ph.D., R.N., administrator of HHS' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which leads federal efforts to increase organ and tissue donation. "Their efforts reflect the heights Americans can reach when they work together toward a common goal."

Each of the 428 winning hospitals had eight or more eligible organ donors during the 22-month award period ending in April 2009. Awards were presented to hospitals based on their performance in meeting or exceeding one or more of three goals: improving donation rates, increasing the number of organs donated per individual donor to 3.75 or higher, and expanding clinical processes for recovering organs.

Saint Luke's Hospital performed 42 heart and 54 kidney transplants in 2008. This year 32 heart and 43 kidney transplants have been performed to date.

"Our ICUs and Emergency Department have worked diligently to provide outstanding care for both potential organ donors and their families," said Nancy Long, director, CVOR/Cardiac and Renal Transplant. "The ICUs' and Emergency Department's dedication to organ donation coupled with our partners at Midwest Transplant Network have allowed us to achieve these results. Because of the gifts of life from our donor families, many people in the Kansas City area have received a second chance at life through transplantation."

HRSA's Donation and Transplantation Community of Practice brings together donation and transplantation professionals and hospital leaders to identify and share best practices to integrate organ donation into hospitals' end-of-life care. This year's event recognizes the importance of including donor designation specialists in hospitals' efforts to increase donation rates at their facilities. The commitment of the individuals and organizations comprising the Community of Practice has helped make possible the transplant of 3,088 more organs from deceased donors in 2008 than in 2003.

For more information about the award, contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Health Services and Resources Administration offices at (301) 443-3376 or visit hrsa.gov.

Saint Luke's Hospital is a member of Saint Luke's Health System, which consists of 11 area hospitals and several primary and specialty care practices, and provides a range of inpatient, outpatient, and home care services. Founded as a faith-based, not-for-profit organization, our mission includes a commitment to the highest levels of excellence in health care and the advancement of medical research and education. The health system is an aligned organization in which the physicians and hospitals assume responsibility for enhancing the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people in the metropolitan Kansas City area and the surrounding region.

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