



everyday heroes



CORE

Center for Organ Recovery & Education

A Pledge for Life

MEDIA KIT
2 0 2 5

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE



CENTER FOR ORGAN RECOVERY & EDUCATION (CORE)

CORE is one of more than 50 federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organizations (OPOs) in the United States, serving nearly five million people in western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Chemung County, New York. CORE coordinates the recovery and matching of organs, tissues and corneas for transplant within our service region, and works tirelessly to create a culture of donation within the hospitals and communities we serve. CORE's mission is to **Save** and **Heal** lives through donation, ultimately ending the deaths of those on the transplant waiting list, while maintaining integrity for the donation process, dignity for the donors, and compassion for their families. For more information, visit www.core.org or call 1-800-DONORS-7 or 1-800-366-6777.

Contact Information

204 Sigma Drive, RIDC Park

Pittsburgh, PA 15238

p: 1-800-DONORS-7 or 1-800-366-6777

Media Inquiries

Katelynn Metz

p: 412-963-3550

m: 202-309-5116 (if on deadline)

e: kmetz@core.org/media@core.org

TRANSPLANT CENTERS

Each of the more than 150 hospitals and health care facilities in CORE's service area act as referral sites for potential donors. Seven of the hospitals also perform organ transplants:

- Allegheny General Hospital
- Charleston Area Medical Center
- UPMC Children's Hospital
- UPMC Hamot
- UPMC Presbyterian
- VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
- WVU Ruby Memorial Hospital

SHARING A STORY ABOUT ORGAN DONATION

OUR MISSION

To **Save** and **Heal** lives through donation.

OUR GOAL

Through public education, including stories in the media, we work tirelessly to create a culture of donation in communities we serve. Our hope is that, by fostering a greater understanding of donation and transplantation and registering more organ donors, we are offering hope to those waiting for a life-saving transplant, while also honoring the truest heroes of donation: the donors and their families.

OUR CALLS TO ACTION

- Register as an organ donor today.
- Sign-up online at **registerme.org/core**.
- Check “yes” when you renew your license.
- **#EveryoneCanGive**
- One organ donor can save eight lives.
- One tissue donor can heal 75 others.
- Tag us on social media **@COREDonateLife**.

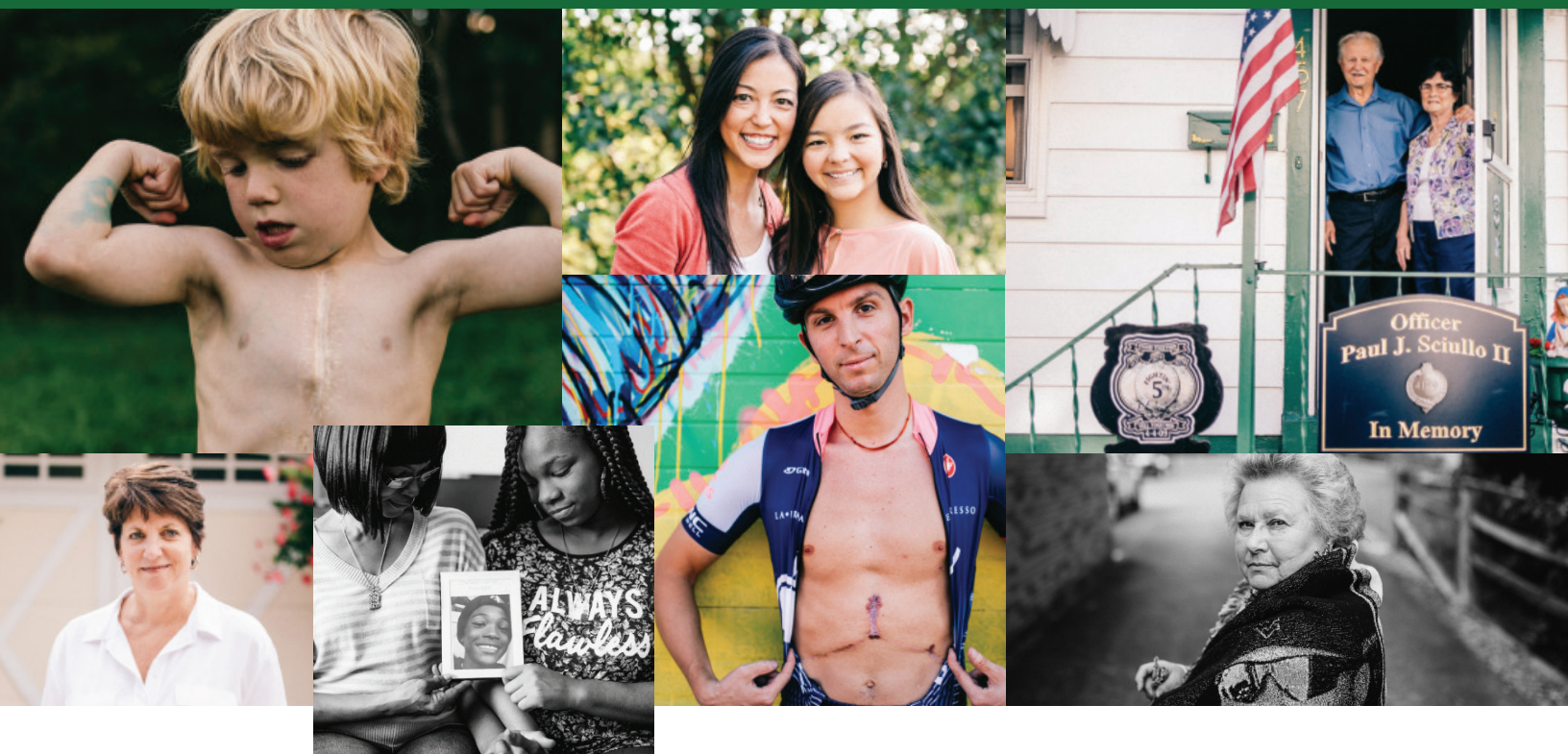
IMPORTANT MESSAGES ABOUT ORGAN DONATION

- Nationally, more than 100,000 people are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.
- Every day, someone local dies waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.
- Myths about donation keep people from registering as donors.
- Organ and tissue donation does not interfere with an open casket funeral.
- All major religions support donation for its humanity and compassion.
- Anyone can become a donor, not just people who are young or in perfect health.
- No matter what, doctors do everything to save a life, and they are never part of the transplant team.
- Each of us is more likely to need a transplant in our lifetime than we are to be a donor after we pass away.
- Diseases, like high blood pressure and diabetes, or even common viruses can destroy the body’s organs.
- Too few people register as organ donors so very few organs are available for transplant.
- Would you want a second chance at life? Remember, if nobody gives, nobody gets.
- Registering takes away a major stressor from your family because they’ll know exactly what you wanted.
- Donation would give your family a legacy they can find strength and comfort in, should the unthinkable happen.



TOP 10 TIPS FOR REPORTING ON ORGAN DONATION

1. In language, tone and images used, be mindful and respectful. The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Code of Ethics calls on reporters to *"Do No Harm"* by treating all story subjects as human beings deserving of respect and compassion. In accordance with this principle, we recommend against using imagery of operating rooms and surgical procedures as well as words like *"cadaver"* and phrases such as *"pull the plug."*
2. Don't use the stigmatizing or offensive words *"harvest"* or *"harvesting;"* instead, use *"recover"* or *"organ recovery."*
3. Refrain from using *"life-support"* in a story about donation. Because organ donation only occurs after all life-saving efforts have been exhausted, the proper term is *"ventilated"* or *"artificial"* support.
4. Organ donation is a rare and generous event. When a story on organ donation does not include a call to action to register as a donor or a mention of each donor's generous gift, the public is left with an overly simplistic understanding of organ donation.
5. Always conclude a donation/transplantation-related story with an opportunity for viewers, listeners and readers to register as an organ donor: *"To register as an organ donor, please visit **registerme.org/core** or check the box at your next trip to the DMV."*
6. Most transplants don't happen without the generosity of a donor and a donor family who, amidst their grief, made the choice to give the gift of life. When reporting a story focused on an organ recipient, take the opportunity to honor the gift given: *"This story is possible because of the generosity of an organ donor."*
7. Recognize the media's role as the most visible source of organ donation information in the country and the responsibility that comes with your role. Actively share the hopeful message that organ donation saves lives and refrain from perpetuating myths that would keep people from registering as organ donors.
8. Rely only on donation and transplant professionals to provide technical details about donation and transplantation. A life-threatening injury or illness can be overwhelming for a family and the process of organ procurement is complex. It is not uncommon during these highly stressful times for family members of donors or recipients to not fully understand the many unfamiliar and complicated conversations, terminology and activities taking place in the hospital.
9. HIPAA laws require hospitals and CORE to obtain patients' expressed permission before releasing any information to media. Although we welcome stories that highlight donation's truest heroes, donors and their families, please understand that we have a duty to transplant recipients and donor families, who may find media attention intrusive and compounding of their grief. Also, the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) recommends that journalists ask themselves, *"Does the public have a justifiable need to know or is this matter just one where some want to know?"* as they balance this public need to know with an individual's right to HIPPA privacy.
10. Stories with sensationalized or inaccurate information are damaging to the public trust, to those awaiting transplantation, and to the honor of donors and donor families who have given the gift of life. If ever in doubt, contact **media@core.org** for more information or to talk to an expert.



*be a **hero**. be an organ donor.*

Make the pledge for life by registering to become an organ, tissue and cornea donor.


100,000+

the number of people awaiting an organ transplant nationally


every
10 minutes

the rate at which someone new is added to the transplant waiting list


250,000

the number of people awaiting tissue and cornea transplants each day


20

the number of people who will die each day without receiving a transplant


8

the number of lives one individual can save by donating organs

on average
11,000

the number of people who die annually considered medically suitable to donate organs, tissue and corneas, yet only a fraction actually donate


2,600

the approximate number of people awaiting transplantation in CORE's service region


75

the number of lives one individual can heal through tissue donation

UNDERSTANDING CORE'S ROLE

DONATION

Individuals sign up to be organ donors through their state registry, generally through the DMV, or on the national registry at registerme.org. If an individual is not registered as a donor, family authorizes donation.

TRANSPLANT

A patient with end-stage organ failure is put on the national transplant waiting list by physicians who have determined the patient is a good candidate for transplant surgery.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN DONORS AND RECIPIENTS



CORE is contacted by the hospital when there is a potential donor — someone who has died from an injury to the brain and has been on a ventilator to maintain blood flow to the organs.



CORE evaluates the potential donor to determine if organ donation is an option.



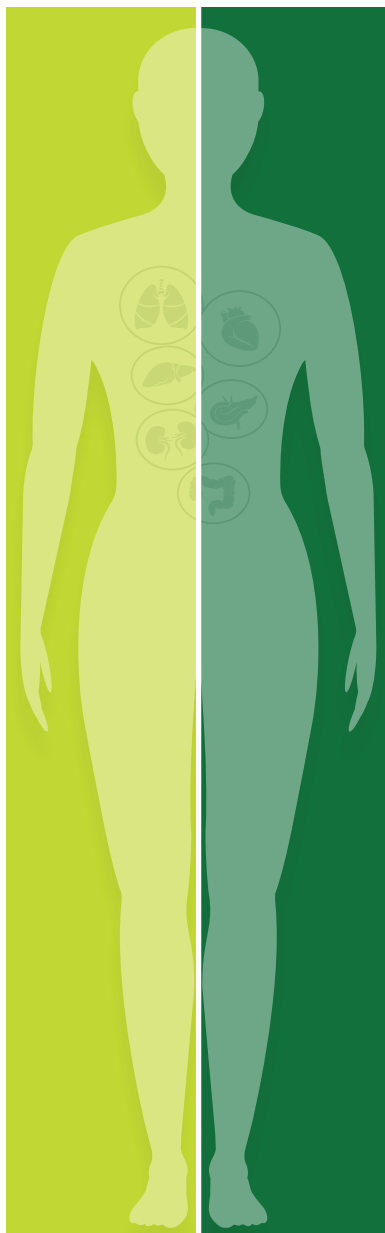
CORE searches the state and national registries to determine if the potential donor is registered.



CORE informs the potential donor's family of the donor's decision or offers the family the opportunity to donate on the donor's behalf.



CORE supports donor families through their grief and helps honor the legacy of their loved ones.



CORE performs necessary diagnostic, blood and tissue typing tests at the hospital or CORE's on-site laboratory.



CORE searches the national transplant waiting list for matching patients.



CORE contacts the transplant centers of the matching recipients to offer the donated organs.



CORE coordinates and oversees the recovery, preservation and transport of organs to recipient transplant hospitals.



CORE works with the funeral home chosen by the donor family to ensure an open casket funeral is possible.



USING THE RIGHT WORDS

Language is very powerful; it can perpetuate misconceptions or offer a space for awareness. Help CORE foster a better understanding of donation and save lives by using the correct donation terminology.

In 2005, the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO) standardized appropriate donation terminology. AOPO reasoned that avoiding words and phrases that cause concern among donor families and the general public would increase both understanding and acceptance of the donation process. This terminology is unanimously supported and used by the American Society of Transplantation (AST) and American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), and has been adopted by the American Journal of Transplantation.

To show respect and sensitivity to those who give the gift of life and their loved ones, we request that only appropriate terms be used when referring to organ, tissue and cornea donation.

APPROPRIATE TERMS INAPPROPRIATE TERMS

"Recover" organs "Harvest" organs

"Recovery" of organs "Harvesting" of organs

"Donation" of organs "To harvest" organs

"Deceased" donation "Cadaver" donation

"Deceased" donor "Cadaveric" donor

"Mechanical" support or "Ventilated" support "Life" support

Organs, tissue and corneas "Body parts"

"Brain Death" "Coma"

"Enhanced" risk "High" risk



DISPELLING ORGAN DONATION MYTHS

MYTH	FACT
If I'm in an accident and they find my license, medical professionals will not try to save my life.	When you go to the hospital for treatment, paramedics, nurses and doctors focus on saving your life — not somebody else's. CORE is only notified after all life-saving efforts have failed.
Maybe I won't really be dead when they recover my organs.	Although it's a popular topic in the tabloids, in reality, people don't start to wiggle their toes after they're declared dead. In fact, people who have agreed to organ donation are given more tests (at no charge to their families) to determine that they're truly dead than are those who haven't agreed to organ donation. Donation doesn't happen until after brain death has been declared by a physician.
There is no difference between brain death and being in a coma.	Brain death is pronounced when there is a lack of blood and oxygen flow to the brain. Brain death is the medical, legal and moral determination of death. To verify brain death, a series of tests are performed over a period of time, and more than one diagnosis is required before the donor's family is presented with the opportunity to donate. There is no recovery from brain death.
My body will be mutilated and disfigured if I would donate.	Organ and tissue donation will not interfere with traditional funeral arrangements such as an open casket. Doctors maintain the utmost respect for the donor and organs are removed in a routine operation similar to other types of surgeries.
Organs go to people who didn't take care of theirs.	Organs go to people who were born with or developed diseases that have caused organ failure. Less than 5 percent of those waiting need a transplant because of their own behaviors or choices. For those people, they must achieve and sustain sobriety before they can be listed for a transplant.
I am too old to become an organ donor.	No one is ever too old or too young to give the gift of life. Every potential donor is evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the time of their death to determine which organs and tissue are suitable for donation.
I am too sick to donate.	Few illnesses or conditions prevent someone from being a donor. People with diabetes, heart disease, cancer, hepatitis and even HIV have saved lives through organ and tissue donation. At the time of death, CORE reviews medical and social histories to determine suitability for donation. Although someone may not be able to donate blood, it does not always prevent the individual from donating organs and/or tissue.
My religion does not support donation.	All major religions consider organ donation to be an individual decision, or support it and see it as the final act of love and generosity toward others.
Wealthy people are the only people who receive transplants.	Financial and celebrity status do not determine who receives a transplant. A national computer network, maintained by the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), matches organs according to height, weight and blood type, followed by medical urgency and then time accrued on the waiting list. Age, race, gender, religious affiliation or financial status are not factors that determine who receives a transplant.
My family will have to pay for costs related to my donation.	Donors and their families are not responsible for any costs related to donation. All costs are incurred by the organ procurement organization.