

**The Joint Commission/CMS Requirements  
for Organ & Tissue Donation**

**ALL DEATHS MUST BE REFERRED REGARDLESS OF PT.'S AGE OR  
DIAGNOSIS TO:**

***NJ Sharing Network***

***1-800-541-0075***

**GUIDELINES FOR REFERRAL:**

***Cardiac Death (Tissue Donation)***

- Obtain a phone number where next of kin can be reached
- Call 1-800-541-0075 within 1 hour of death
- Document the call, date, time, and outcome in patient record

***Imminent Death (Organ Donation)***

**Regardless of age or diagnosis, call within 1 hour on all vented patients when they meet  
any of the following:**

- Call 1-800-541-0075 with Glasgow coma scale (GCS) is 5 or less
- Call when 2 or more of the following cranial nerve reflexes are absent:

*Cough Reflex*  
*Loss of respirations*

*Gag Reflex*  
*Corneal Reflex*

*Pupillary response*  
*Response to Pain*

- Call when discussions of the following occur: plan of de-escalation of care and before the withdrawal of life support, making End of Life Decisions -while organs are still viable for transplant

**• EFFECTIVE/COLLABORATIVE REQUEST PROCESS:**

Call prior to any discussion/mention of donation with the family. NJ Sharing Network will first determine medical suitability and then plan and discuss with you how to best approach the family. As per Federal Regulations, The Joint Commission requirements, and your hospital's Affiliation Agreement and policies, NJ Sharing Network Staff must be involved in the request for donation and offering the opportunity to families. Please call Marley A. Nicolas, RN, MSN Organ Donation Liaison at 732-557-8715 for any questions.

4/12/10mn

### Update from NJ Sharing Network

As a crucial partner to NJ Sharing Network, please take a moment to review some information regarding our current practices in donation and transplantation. It will be beneficial to keep these practices in mind when you are faced with a patient who may have the potential to donate.

- NJ Sharing Network is the *designated requestor* for Community Medical Center and our trained requestors that initiate the donation conversation. There are 3 key reasons why it's important that NJ Sharing Network staff approach the family:
  1. *The patient may have already legally designated their wishes through the state registry which is their legal consent. In these instances we notify the family of their wishes.*
  2. *NJ Sharing Network determines medical suitability. We do not want to offer the option for donation if the patient is not suitable and potentially give this family a double loss.*
  3. *Perceived conflict of interest: it's important that there is a separation between the healthcare team caring for the patient and NJ Sharing Network who is there to offer donation options.*
- Organ referrals are made to NJ Sharing Network when a patient is ventilator dependent and has suffered a non-survivable neurological injury.
- All deaths are referred for the potential of tissue donation which includes corneas, bone, skin and heart valves. One organ donor can save up to 8 lives and one tissue donor can restore health to over 50.

There are now over **130,000** people on the national transplant waiting list, making the need for organ donors even more critical. Over **5,000** of those patients wait in the state of New Jersey alone. Working collaboratively whenever the rare opportunity for donation occurs (**less than 1% of all deaths**) allows us the most optimal outcome when offering families the opportunity to donate.

NJ Sharing Network offers families many services after the donation is completed including grief counseling, memorial events and other **support programs**. Families take great pride in **celebrating the legacy of life** their loved ones were able to give. Much of this would not be possible without the collaboration of our medical staff. Thank you for your time and support. Our representative from NJ Sharing Network is Katie Strusiak. She is available for case reviews, in-services or general questions and can be reached at [KStrusiak@NJSharingNetwork.org](mailto:KStrusiak@NJSharingNetwork.org). If you have any further questions please also feel free to reach out to Community Medical Center's liaison, Marley Nicolas at [MNicolas@BarnabasHealth.org](mailto:MNicolas@BarnabasHealth.org).