

PHYSICIAN CONNECTION

Issue III

Winter

2018

Collaboration



Education



Innovation

Planned Donation Pathway

The donation conversation should be discussed according to a plan that is agreed upon by the healthcare team and Donor Network of Arizona (DNA) during the education huddle. When donation is introduced to the family, DNA should always be present. Donation should not be mentioned prior to the planning huddle conducted by hospital staff and a DNA representative.

Delivery of consistent and understandable information throughout the patient's stay is the foundation for a good donation conversation. Timing of the donation conversation with family is critical to the process.

Early and unplanned mentions of donation before they have a full understanding of their loved one's demise can be perceived as insensitive and may lead to distrust of the healthcare team. Therefore, the donation conversation should be separate from and occur following either determination of brain death or after the family has made the decision to withdraw care.

Steps to a Successful Planned Donation Conversation

1. Healthcare team and DNA conduct a donation huddle - it's a team approach!

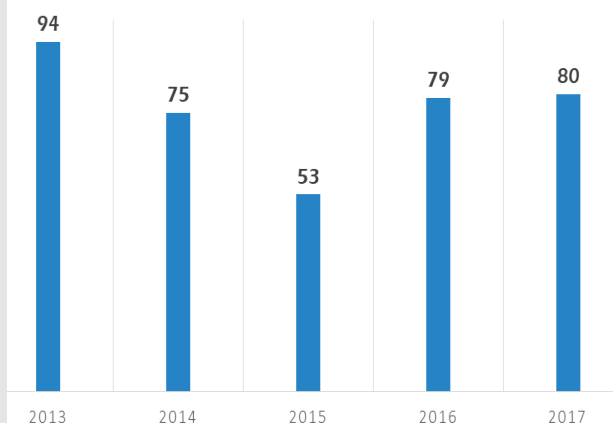
2. **Brain Dead Donor** - Healthcare team determines death by neurological criteria and communicates diagnosis to the family. The doctor should assure that the family verbalizes their understanding.

Donation after Circulatory Death (DCD) - The doctor communicates grave diagnosis to the family. Family verbalizes to staff that they wish to withdraw care.

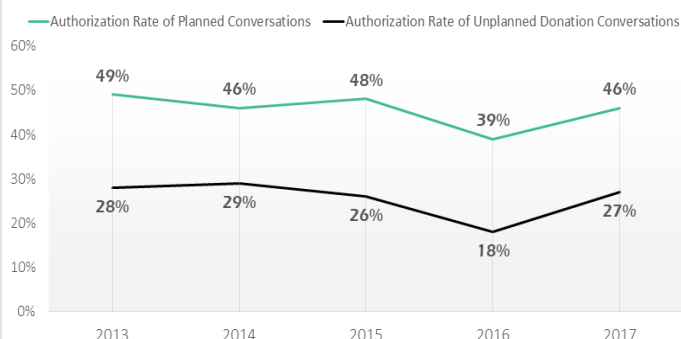
3. Healthcare team and DNA representative speak to family together in a private setting, where Healthcare team introduces DNA representative.

4. DNA discusses donation with the family or the family is made aware that their loved one is a registered donor.

UNPLANNED DONATION CONVERSATIONS



DONATION CONVERSATIONS



19%

Over the last five years, donation conversations that were planned, authorized 19 percentage points more often than ones that were unplanned

JOIN US ONLINE! www.DNAZ.org

[Facebook.com/DonateLifeAZ](https://www.facebook.com/DonateLifeAZ)

[@DonateLifeAZ](https://www.instagram.com/DonateLifeAZ)

[@DonateLifeAZ](https://www.youtube.com/DonateLifeAZ)

[YouTube.com/DonateLifeAZ](https://www.youtube.com/DonateLifeAZ)

[Pinterest.com/DonateLifeAZ](https://www.pinterest.com/DonateLifeAZ)

DONATE LIFE
NETWORK OF ARIZONA
A Donate Life Organization

1



Physician Spotlight

Michelle M. Munkwitz, MD,
Pediatric Critical Care
Phoenix Children's Hospital

Dr. Munkwitz is a practicing pediatrician in Phoenix. She specializes in Pediatric Critical Care Medicine and is currently practicing at Phoenix Children's Hospital.

What initially sparked your interest in donation?

At 18, I walked into my apartment after finishing my evening shift and received the worst phone call of my life. My pastor in Wisconsin called to tell me that my brother had died in a car accident. When I arrived home for the funeral, my father told me one of the first questions he asked when receiving the news was "Can he donate his organs?" We did not know anything about the donation process at that time.

As my brother didn't regain circulation in the emergency room and had significant chest and abdominal trauma, he wasn't able to donate organs. I felt the disappointment my father felt on top of our tragic loss. Later, we found out that my brother gave someone the gift of sight through his corneas. Although we continued to grieve the loss of him, his ability to give a better quality of life to another person gave us some meaning to his death and some peace. We knew that a part of him lived on in another person. He lived his short life always giving to other people. In fact, earlier on the day of his death, he had donated blood. Donating a part of him not only gave meaning to his death, but continued meaning to his life.

Why did you take on the role as a physician champion for donation at PCH?

There are times in my work when I have done all that I can medically for a child, but it's not enough to overcome an illness or injury, and the child dies. During these times, it's important to provide the most meaningful death experience I can for my patient and their family. I have a unique perspective on donation, both from a donor family's point of view and as a physician. It's my goal to help as many families as possible have the option of donation and to achieve their wishes through a seamless team effort with Donor Network of Arizona and the PICU team.

What do you think donation offers to your patients' families?

Families find comfort in knowing their child lives on through their gift to another. Donation is probably the most significant way for a family to experience meaning in the heartbreaking loss of their child.

Where do you see donation going in the future?

I have seen an interesting transition in the arts and media, from a prior focus on the hope an organ transplant can offer, to the questions that have arisen in the recent years regarding the legitimacy of brain death. This is particularly true in many religious cultures throughout the world. I think that we have the opportunity to raise awareness and provide education on this topic using town halls and social media as well as traditional arts and media platforms. I also think this is a great time to increase our cultural sensitivity and respect by learning more about the diverse populations we serve.



A Donate Life Organization