



United
Network
for
Organ
Sharing

News Release



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Total Organ Donations Rise More Than 5 Percent in 2000; Cadaveric Donation Increases 2.7 Percent

Organ transplants rose 5.4 percent in 2000 compared to 1999, according to preliminary data on U.S. organ donors released today by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration and the United Network for Organ Sharing.

Organ transplants in 2000 totaled 22,827, an increase of 1,172 over the 21,655 transplants that occurred in 1999. The figures were announced as part of National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, April 15-22.

"We're encouraged by the progress that has been made in the last year, but there's still a very long way to go," said HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson. The Secretary noted that the number of Americans seeking transplants – more than 75,000 – remains far above the number of donors.

Secretary Thompson will unveil his national initiative on donation tomorrow in events at HHS headquarters and the National Press Club.

The number of living donors rose from 4,747 in 1999 to 5,532 in 2000, an increase of 16.5 percent, the largest one-year jump ever recorded. Donors from cadavers rose from 5,825 in 1999 to 5,984 in 2000, an increase of 2.7 percent.

UNOS President Patricia Adams, M.D., said the large increase in living donation results from progress in the field of transplantation combined with the relative shortage of cadaveric donors.

"We must remember that increasing living donation alone will not save enough lives," said Dr. Adams. "We must continue to educate the public about the importance of organ donation, which is what National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week is all about." A calendar of NOTDAW events around the country is available online at www.unos.org.

HHS' Health Resources and Services Administration – through its Division of Transplantation -- oversees and provides funds for the nation's organ procurement, allocation and transplantation system and administers the national bone marrow registry program. The division, part of HRSA's Office of Special Programs, also coordinates national organ and tissue donation activities and funds research to learn more about what works to increase donation.

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The United Network for Organ Sharing, a nonprofit charitable organization, maintains the nation's organ transplant waiting list under a HRSA contract. Under that contract and on behalf of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, UNOS brings together medical professionals, transplant recipients and donor families to develop organ transplantation policy.

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