

Position Statement on Donation after Circulatory Death (DCD) in the Neurologically Aware

Ethics Committee

*Ms. Alexandra Glazier, JD, MPH, Chair
June 24-25, 2013*

Background

- Potential DCD candidates: Patients who are on a ventilator after devastating and irreversible brain injuries, and following a decision to withdraw support.
- Neurologically Aware: Patients who are able to authorize their own treatment and donation decisions.

Why Make a Statement?

- It has been reported that some transplant professionals are reluctant to recover or accept organs from DCD donors who made their own decision to withdraw support.
- Ethical guidance is needed to support the coordination of DCD in these cases. This is expected to facilitate use of organs for transplantation.
- Historically the Board has adopted short statements from time to time on topics where ethical guidance is sought.

Committee Consideration of the Issue

- The Ethics Committee unanimously determined that *DCD in the neurological aware population does not raise any unique ethical issues.*
- The main consideration is that the withdrawal of care decision is made in an ethically and clinically appropriate manner and independent of the donation decision.

Committee Support and Vote

- Ethics Committee voted to recommend the statement by a vote of *22 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions*.
- OPO Committee Leadership reviewed the statement and was comfortable that it did not conflict with current DCD policies and generally supported it.
- OPTN/UNOS Executive Committee reviewed at May 1, 2013 mtg and voted to present the position statement to the full Board.

If approved...

- Position statement will be posted on the OPTN website as a professional resource
- May be highlighted in *UNOS Update* and *Transplant Pro*

Resolution 10

- **RESOLVED**, that the position statement regarding DCD in the neurologically aware population, as set forth in Resolution 10, is hereby approved, effective June 25, 2013.

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Questions?