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Ruthanne Leishman Hanto Named Kidney Paired Donation (KPD) Program Manager

RICHMOND, Va., - Ruthanne Hanto has been named program manager of the OPTN Kidney Paired Donation (KPD) Program. The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) manages the nation's transplant system, including the OPTN Kidney Paired Donation program, under contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration.

Kidney paired donation (KPD) involves the coordinated matching of living donors with medically compatible recipients in cases where the original intended recipient is not compatible with his or her potential donor. The goal of the national KPD Program, which is in its pilot phase, is to maximize the number of living donor kidney transplants with a focus on giving opportunities to highly-sensitized kidney transplant candidates, who are currently an underserved population with less access to care. Currently 81 transplant centers participate in the national pilot through four coordinating centers.

In her new role, Hanto will manage all aspects of the national KPD system. She will enroll transplant programs, answer technical questions, execute monthly match runs and document areas for system improvements. "UNOS is lucky to have Hanto, whose experience in KPD is unparalleled," said OPTN/UNOS President Jack Lake, M.D. "She'll be working to fully automate the system which will streamline the process so that participating centers will be able to get the results from the same system used for deceased donor organ matching instead of by e-mail."

In 2005 Hanto was instrumental in establishing the first and one of the largest regional kidney paired donation programs, the New England Program for Kidney Exchange (NEPKE). As NEPKE's Program Manager, Hanto oversaw the development of the first fully integrated computer optimization system for matching incompatible donor/recipient pairs. Under Hanto's leadership, NEPKE saw a six-fold increase in the number of KPD transplants and more than doubled the number of participating centers.

Hanto holds a master's degree in public health from Boston University School of Public Health, an associate's degree in nursing from Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, MD, and a bachelor's of science degree in communication arts with a minor in business administration from St. John's University in Jamaica, NY.

A private, nonprofit organization, UNOS manages the nation's organ transplant system and oversees the world's most comprehensive database of clinical transplant information under contract with the federal government. UNOS operates the 24-hour computerized organ sharing system, matching donated organs to patients registered on the national organ transplant waiting list. UNOS seeks to increase organ donation through education and improve transplant success rates through outcomes-based research and policymaking. Transplant scientists and health officials recognize UNOS-developed technology

applications as the international model for organ sharing. Income from UNOS' for-profit business lines support the UNOS mission to advance organ availability and transplantation by uniting and supporting its communities for the benefit of patients through education, technology and policy development.

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