El donor en los Tiempos del Corona

(With apologies to Gabriel Garcia Márquez)

PJ Geraghty
Donor Network of Arizona
Warnings...

- Reports from China began in late December 2019
- 1\textsuperscript{st} USA case identified mid-January 2020
- 1\textsuperscript{st} AZ case identified 1/26/2020
- No public concern in the US until late February
- DNA closed its offices 3/16/2020
Initial operations

- Rapid change to remote services
- Daily conference calls with leadership and departments
- Reduced response to organ referrals
- Tissue processors inconsistent with acceptance
- Staff concerns
Staff Safety

• Deployed an online survey tool to guide staff on identifying illness
• Very clear guidance on prevention
• Early requirement for in-office masking
• Approximately 40 staff with confirmed COVID-19 infection
• NO intra-office transmission
Staff retention

• NO LAYOFFS
  • Some positions not replaced even today

• Hourly staff were guaranteed 80 hours per pay period through the end of 2020

• Identified areas that under-utilized staff could contribute
PPE Shuffle

- Purchasing coordinator bought all the masks he could
  - N95s restricted quickly
- Sent N95s, face shields, and goggles to all field staff
- Staff member sewed reusable multi-layer cloth masks for all staff
Settled into routine

- Non-clinical staff worked from home
- Call center, tissue recovery, HLA staff worked from office
- Organ, DFS, HD staff responded to hospitals for EOL discussions
- Quickly adapted to our new virtual reality
OK, OK. HELLO EVERYONE. JUDAS YOU ON?
And this little detail...
Donors

• Quickly established communication with key contacts in hospitals

• Emphasized our commitment to keep donation happening
  • No real evidence of potential donors being de-escalated

• Identified hospitals willing to accept donor transfers if other hospitals filled up

• Attempted (without success) to identify a SDS center for donor transfers
Family care

- Staff initially restricted in hospitals
- Family visitation restricted or prohibited
- Rapid transition to phone conversations
  - 7% 4Q19 to 60% in 2Q20 (currently ~40%)
  - Overall conversion rate largely unchanged
- Increased incidence of short-notice withdrawal of support
Donor Management

- Very fast transition to testing as a requirement
- Different programs had different requirements for testing (NP vs BAL etc.)
- Initial testing slow and unreliable, thus even slower
- Required lots of senior leadership involvement
SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR Donor Testing

- Initially sending to VRL in Kansas City
- Quickly identified Mayo Clinic Hospital as a local option
- Refined the process to allow for online ordering and reporting
- Shared our need for BAL specimen testing; Mayo developed reliable system to complete it
- >400 tests to date, only one positive
Organ Allocation/Recovery

- Some centers “protected” ICU beds for expected COVID patients, leading to reduced access for transplant candidates
- Delays waiting for test results (donor and candidates)
- Reduction in elective surgeries meant LOTS of free OR time!
Other areas affected

- Referral volume up 50% year-over-year
  - Added a COVID phone option and dedicated call-taker
- Tissue and ocular age-adjusted COVID deferrals at ~50%
- New donor registrations down 30%
  - MVD closed or reduced availability for several months
Today

• 311 organ donors in 2020, decrease of 3 from 2019
• 954 organs (1,005 in 2019)
• Conversion rate 60.9% (up from 59.4%)
• Office still closed
• Staff vaccinated
• AZ infection steadily decreasing
• Light at the end of the tunnel?
We soldier on…