

College Students Can be the Key to America's Organ Shortage

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POSTER PRESENTATION

ABSTRACT: The increasing shortage of organ donations is costing 21 American lives per day - amounting to nearly 8,000 lives lost each year. A potential solution to help solve this problem is by offering additional opportunities for college students to enroll as organ donors. Individuals are only actively solicited to become organ donors when they interact with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). There needs to be additional opportunities for organ donor enrollment to gain the 32 million registered organ donors needed to alleviate this organ shortage. In Fall 2014, 21 million students were expected to attend American colleges and universities. According to the Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (OPTN), 71% of college students are not registered organ donors. However, Americans of this age bracket have consistently given the most organs (deceased donors) and according to the OPTN, 76.9% of those not registered expressed that they would be willing to register to become organ donors. To help gain donors, Universities need to require students to follow a link to organdonor.gov, which provides more information and gives the interested parties the opportunity to register in their state donor registries. Students will not be required to sign up to become registered organ donors, but rather given the opportunity to do so by following this link. The primary ethical dilemmas surrounding organ transplantation arise from the shortage of available organs. By targeting college students using an existing system, there is a potential to effectively work to close the organ donor gap.

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