

Team Philadelphia will go for the gold at the U.S. Transplant Games, July 11-16 in Pittsburgh. Check out the Team's website at [www.donors1.org/teamphilly](http://www.donors1.org/teamphilly)

organ & tissue donation  
& transplantation

# Clinical update

Published by Gift of Life Donor Program for Healthcare Professionals

## New Collaborative Builds on Previous Success to Save More Lives

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, a series of National Breakthrough Collaboratives have united hospital partners and organ procurement organizations (OPO) in an effort to maximize each and every organ donation opportunity.

In March, transplant, organ procurement, and acute care hospital partners from across the U.S. met to discuss the final component of the National Breakthrough Collaborative series surrounding organ donation and transplantation, the **Transplant Growth and Management Collaborative**.

The purpose of this effort is to save or enhance thousands of lives a year by maximizing the number of organs transplanted from every donor and build the necessary capacity within the nation's transplant programs to transplant 35,000 deceased donor organs annually. This goal centers on increasing the capacity of transplant centers to assure that every one of the increasing supply of viable organs is transplanted.

The Collaborative strategy of creating an "all teach, all learn" environment was instituted during the **Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Learning Session** held in Phoenix on March 4-5. From this region, *Gift of Life Donor Program* representatives were joined by partners from **Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, Temple University Hospital, Pinnacle Health System/Harrisburg Hospital** and the **Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania**.

The Transplant Growth and Management Collaborative is building on the success seen by the previous cycles of the Collaborative - increasing conversion rates to 75 percent or higher, transplanting at least 3.75 organs per donor, and increasing the amount of Donations after Cardiac Deaths (DCD).

As in previous Collaboratives, OPOs were challenged to increase the number of available transplantable organs by instituting best demonstrated practices for family support, consent conversations, and achievement of donor management goals. Donor management goals are protocols intended to optimize the donor's hemodynamic status, oxygenation, electrolytes, and fluid and acid-base balance. These goals, based upon local and national experience and leading practices, are instrumental in increasing organ viability during the organ donation process.

Transplant centers, in turn, were challenged to maximize their internal systems and processes to increase efficiency, adding to the likelihood of increasing overall transplants.

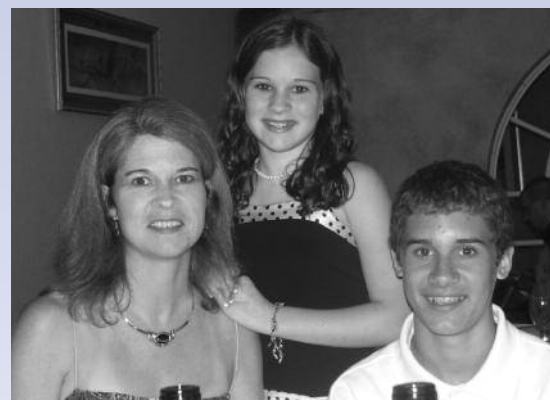
These efforts can help to significantly decrease the amount of people on the waiting list, by making each and every possible gift available to those people hoping for a second chance at life.

More information, as well as other resources regarding the collaborative, can be found at [www.healthdisparities.net](http://www.healthdisparities.net).

### AtlantiCare's Personal Message to Promote Donate Life Month

**Dianne Bottino's story is one that should not have come to be. Unfortunately, the statistic is there - 18 people every day in this nation die waiting for a life-saving transplant. On February 11, 2007, Dianne's husband Joseph, and the father of their two children, was one of those people.**

While stricken with sadness and confusion, she and her family have taken their story and are striving to make sure no other family has to deal with loss the way they have. Dianne's employer, **AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center**, also joined her crusade during April, annually recognized as National Donate Life Month.



*Dianne Bottino with her two children, Megan, 13, and Joey, 15.*

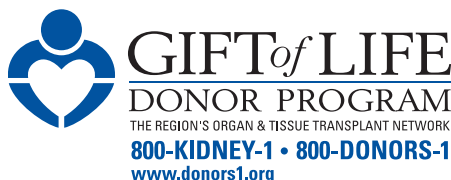
Throughout April, *Gift of Life* works with many of its hospital partners to educate the community through multiple events highlighting the critical shortage of organs and tissue for transplantation.

For AtlantiCare, the crux of their efforts centered on a television ad that was produced, showcasing Dianne discussing her story and encouraging people to sign up as a donor. The hospital also pitched Dianne's story to several media outlets in the southern New Jersey area to publicize organ and tissue donation.

For Dianne, her work to raise awareness is part of a promise she made to her husband. She and Joseph enjoyed a great life until he discovered his liver was failing from a Hepatitis C infection. He spent months in the hospital growing more and more ill, while his family hoped and prayed his second chance would come in the form of a transplant. Sadly, his never came.

In the aftermath of losing their loved one, the Bottino family pledged to raise awareness and have held to that by getting involved with educating the community, both through *Gift of Life* events, their own efforts, and the media campaign with AtlantiCare.

*continued on back page*



# Celebrating Two Gifts of Life

For Edith Helm, the transplant she received gave life not just to her; it enabled her to create life herself.

Helm celebrated that dual miracle on March 10 with the people who made it possible, during a reception in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the first successful pregnancy after transplant on That date marked the 50th birthday of her son, John, who was born following her kidney transplant.

Helm, along with her twin sister and donor Wanda Foster, were present via video link, speaking to the 120 people in attendance. Joining her via teleconference was Dr. Joseph Murray, a Nobel Prize winning surgeon who performed Mrs. Helm's transplant. Those present included other transplant recipients and their families, *Gift of Life* staff, and many medical professionals from **Thomas Jefferson University Hospital**.

Helm also paved the way for one of Thomas Jefferson's important projects, the **National Transplantation Pregnancy Registry (NTPR)**. This group was established in 1991 at Thomas Jefferson to study the outcomes of pregnancies in female transplant recipients and those fathered by male transplant recipients. The Registry stands as a symbol of hope and success, showing that transplant recipients not only live fulfilled lives, but can also follow through with plans to build a family. More than 1,400 recipients, reporting over 2,200 pregnancies, have participated in the registry, including kidney, liver, liver-kidney, pancreas-kidney, heart, heart-lung, and lung recipients from all over North America.

Dr. Vincent Armenti, professor in the Department of Surgery and Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Cell Biology, serves as principal investigator of the NTPR.



*Children of parents who have all participated in the registry help blow out candles in honor of John Helm's 50th birthday.*

"Transplants and parenthood may sound like an unlikely combination," said Dr. Armenti, "but the registry provides more than 15 years of evidence showing it is not only possible, but that recipients and their children can thrive."

"Women and men from across the U.S. have contributed to the registry, with a majority of the women going on to have many successful pregnancies and men fathering healthy children. Through the data we collect, we are able to offer valuable information to healthcare professionals and recipients considering parenthood."

Further information about the NTPR is available at [www.jefferson.edu/ntpr](http://www.jefferson.edu/ntpr) or by contacting the NTPR at 877-955-6877 or via email at [ntpr.registry@jefferson.edu](mailto:ntpr.registry@jefferson.edu).



*A group picture of all those who celebrated transplant recipient Edith Helm and the 50th anniversary of the birth of her son, John, during the March 10 event.*

## AtlantiCare, continued

"We had already partnered with the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) to bring additional attention to the importance of donor designation when we learned of her personal tragedy and her advocacy work," said Jennifer Tornetta, manager of Community and External Relations at AtlantiCare. "Upon her joining our Marketing and Communications Department, we respectfully asked Dianne if she'd share her story. Through NJHA we shared Dianne's incredible story of love and courage in the midst of her family's loss. We also shared her story with community leaders. She's committed to preventing other families from suffering when organ donation would make a difference."

To see more of AtlantiCare's Donate Life Month efforts, visit its website at [www.atlanticare.org](http://www.atlanticare.org).

## Calendar of EVENTS

A look ahead at some programs being offered for our Hospital Partners:

### Donation Champion Trainings

**When:** July 23

**Where:** Gift of Life Donor Program, in Philadelphia

**When:** October 1

**Where:** Gift of Life Donor Program, in Philadelphia

**For more information, contact Gift of Life's Hospital Services Department at 1-800-KIDNEY-1 (1-800-543-6391) or 215-557-8090.**

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Philadelphia, PA  
Permit No. 862

**GIFT of LIFE**  
DONOR PROGRAM  
THE REGION'S ORGAN & TISSUE TRANSPLANT NETWORK  
800-KIDNEY-1 • 800-DONORS-1  
[www.donors1.org](http://www.donors1.org)  
401 North 3rd Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123-4101

Comments & suggestions about this newsletter can be sent to the editor at: [ddelvecchio@donors1.org](mailto:ddelvecchio@donors1.org)