

# NEWS

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## **GIFT OF HOPE ORGAN & TISSUE DONOR NETWORK ANNOUNCED**

ELMHURST, Ill. – Following more than a year of research and planning with donor families, healthcare professionals and the public, Regional Organ Bank of Illinois (ROBI) has changed its name to **Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network**.

The change was officially announced July 10, in conjunction with the organization’s 15th anniversary. Use of the new name is intended to more effectively engage the public in support of organ and tissue donation before families are faced with making the decision for a loved one.

“It’s a name that clearly communicates our purpose and mission, and will motivate more people to support the gift of hope given through organ and tissue donation,” said Gift of Hope President/CEO Jerry Anderson. “We believe this change will measurably impact the number of organs and tissue available for transplant – and ultimately the number of lives saved.”

The idea for the name change sprung from concerns that Regional Organ Bank of Illinois did not accurately reflect the organization’s identity and work: It is not regional or a bank, it covers both organs and tissues, and it is responsible for both Illinois and northwest Indiana.

Hospital professionals asked for input during the research indicated no strong connections to the ROBI name, despite their familiarity with it. They generally felt that a less clinical name would be more effective in carrying the important donation message to the public.

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Input from donor families and members of the general public largely echoed those comments. Donor families – most of whom were not familiar with ROBI until they made the decision to donate – expressed a strong desire for the organization to publicize its work. They felt the ROBI name emphasized the donation process rather than the emotional benefits of donation.

Members of the general public reported little familiarity with ROBI or believed it was a government entity – and suggested a more benefit-driven name that reflects its positive work and promotes hope.

“As a result, Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network was selected as the name that best describes our mission – to save and enhance the lives of as many people as possible through organ and tissue donation – by identifying the emotional facet to the work that we do,” Anderson said. “It encompasses both sides of the donation process, encouraging families to provide the precious gift that gives hope to the many people waiting for a lifesaving organ or life-enhancing tissue transplant.”

Gift of Hope is working closely with hospitals to familiarize hospital staff with the new name and reasons for the change, as well as donor families throughout the organization’s 15-year history. For more information about Gift of Hope, call 630/758-2600 or visit [www.giftofhope.org](http://www.giftofhope.org).

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