Coroner/Medical Examiner Participation in a Heart Procurement

The following protocol explains the role of Gift of Hope Organ & Donor Network tissue coordinators during the heart procurement process. As members of the surgical team, pathologists play an observational role during procurement. The protocol also outlines the documentation provided by CryoLife, Inc.

The Gift of Hope tissue coordinator will:

- Assist the pathologist with aseptic technique and oversee the entire procurement to maintain the sterile integrity of the procurement.
  - The pathologist will be required to wear surgical dress, hair covering, mask, sterile gown and gloves, and will be expected to practice aseptic technique as part of the surgical team during the procurement.

- Perform the dissection and secure the blood samples per Gift of Hope protocol.
  - The pathologist will be allowed to observe the procurement and mentally note any observations (cannot break scrub to write).
  - Once the heart is removed from the donor, the pathologist can view/examine the heart by palpation.

- Incise open the apex of the heart to flush out the chambers of the heart with saline.
  - At this time, the pathologist may visually examine the right and left ventricles and inferior surfaces of the valves.

- Package the heart for transport per CryoLife protocol.
  - At this time, the coroner/pathologist will not be allowed to do any further examination of the heart.

CryoLife will, upon request:

- Produce a hard copy pathology report (faxed or mailed) within 5-7 business days. The report is comparable to any standard forensic coronary pathology report.

- Send all H-E stained histology slides from all areas of interest of the heart, including myocardial/septal walls and coronary arteries.

- Return the fixed residual heart tissue directly to the requesting pathologist or coroner for his/her examination.