Aug. 1 is National Minority Donor Awareness Day
More than 4,700 men, women and children in Illinois are on the national transplant waiting list, with minorities making up 56 percent of those waiting and African-Americans alone comprising 37 percent. National Minority Donor Awareness Day (NMDAD) draws attention to the urgent need for minority donation and transplantation.

The high percentage stems from the increased frequency among minority populations of diabetes, hypertension and other conditions leading to the need for a transplant. Kidneys top the list as the most needed transplant, with more than 3,700 individuals waiting in Illinois.

To learn ways your hospital can participate in NMDAD, contact your hospital’s Gift of Hope liaison at 630/758-2600.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital opens transplant clinic in Indiana
Northwestern Memorial Hospital transplant physicians have opened an Organ Transplant Clinic in Portage, Ind., in response to the growing need to expand access to transplantation services in neighboring states. The clinic will serve potential transplant candidates as well as those seeking consultations for advanced or complex liver disease, and will minimize the need for patients to make frequent long drives to downtown Chicago for care.

Patient care conferences enable more effective communication and higher donation rates
Identified as a best practice through the Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative, a patient care conference (PCC) is a meeting of involved personnel from the hospital and Gift of Hope to gather information regarding the care of a potential organ donor patient. This practice, being implemented by Gift of Hope, is a powerful tool for supporting patients and their families, and donation.

PCC elements—What will we talk about?
Generally called by a Gift of Hope Organ Recovery Coordinator, Family Support Services Coordinator or Hospital Development Coordinator, a PCC will include discussion about:

- Hospital plan of care
- Particulars regarding brain death evaluation or donation after cardiac death (DCD) suitability
- Clinical factors relevant to preservation of the donation option
- Family dynamics, legal NOK identification, donor registry status and ME/coroner eligibility
- Effective requesting process (who should approach family, when, etc.)
- Discussion of plan/next steps

PCC participants—Who should be in the meeting?
Any involved hospital personnel may be included in a PCC, as applicable:

- Nurses—bedside nurse and any key unit managers
- Physicians—any attending physicians, fellows or residents involved in the patient’s day-to-day care
- Additional disciplines—any sub-specialists (neuro, trauma, intensivist, critical care) involved in the patient’s care
- Respiratory/Pulmonary specialists—those involved in apnea testing and withdrawal of ventilator
- Pastoral care/Social work—staff involved in family support and/or end-of-life discussions
- Anesthesia/OR staff—any staff involved in the organ recovery surgery

PCC criteria—When will a conference be called?
Following are examples of when a PCC may be called:

- During the initial patient evaluation, after medical suitability has been determined
- Family/care team are planning to discuss DNR or withdrawal of ventilator support
- Family brings up donation
- Brain death evaluation is planned or declaration has been made
- Patient is hemodynamically unstable
- Prior to the donation conversation
- Prior to extubation during DCD cases and prior to OR
- At the request of the patient care team

We look forward to collaborating with you on this proven approach. If you have any questions, please contact your hospital’s Gift of Hope liaison at 630/758-2600.

More than 800 sign up in donor registry at area hospitals!
Several hospitals teamed with Gift of Hope during National Donate Life Month by hosting donor registration drives. Of the more than 4,100 registrations in Illinois’ donor registry during donor drives in April, more than 800 took place at hospital drives! Advocate hospitals registered more than 300 donors, with Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center and Advocate Lutheran General Hospital registering nearly 270 and Advocate Christ Medical Center adding about 50 more.

Donor drive hosted by Advocate Illinois Masonic. Standing left to right: Staff Sharon Ward and Pam Willis, and Gift of Hope liaison Britta Cruz.