



*The Organization for Transplant Professionals*

## **NATCO, THE ORGANIZATION FOR TRANSPLANT PROFESSIONALS POSITION STATEMENT**

### **Intended Recipient Donation and Paired Live Donation**

**NATCO**, *The Organization for Transplant Professionals*, represents approximately 2,500 devoted individuals who follow the patient from the evaluation phase and the waiting list period through transplantation event and long-term post-transplant. NATCO's members can be found in procurement organizations and in hospital settings, offering counseling and medical management, serving as a daily resource for patients and families.

Live kidney donation has become a viable solution to the organ shortage and to the long waiting times for a deceased donor kidney. Living donor transplants offer excellent long-term graft survival and patient outcomes. A limiting factor to optimizing the living donor pool is the lack of compatibility of the potential living donors with the intended recipient. This has led to the evolution of two potential options for the living donor to donate to a recipient other than the intended recipient.

#### **1. Intended Recipient Donation**

In this scenario, the living donor donates a kidney to a recipient who is identified from the UNOS/OPTN deceased donor waiting list using a similar process as is used for a deceased donor kidney. The original intended incompatible recipient of the living donor kidney receives priority on the deceased donor waiting list for the next available kidney.

#### **2. Paired Donation**

In this scenario, two living donors are incompatible with two intended recipients, but are compatible with the each other's recipient. Donor A donates to recipient B and donor B donates to recipient A. Cases of three way matches have also been reported.

Both options provide a living donor the opportunity to indirectly help their loved one while increasing the total number of kidneys available for transplant, without any intent to violate the National Organ Transplant Act (NOTA). The National Organ Transplant Act, Section 301, prohibits organ purchases and states:

*"It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly acquire, receive, or otherwise transfer any human organ for valuable consideration for use in human transplantation if the transfer affects interstate commerce."*

Several members of the transplant community are working to clarify this section within NOTA so there is no interpretation that would negatively affect paired live kidney donation. NATCO supports these efforts.

### **Recommendations**

NATCO supports **Paired Donation** and **Intended Recipient Donation** and encourages transplant centers to pursue these options either independently or through their donor service areas (DSAs) as appropriate. NATCO believes the potential to significantly decrease the kidney waiting list with either of these options can only be achieved through the sharing of best practices, development of policies and procedures to ensure ethical, equitable and safe practices, and with oversight by the UNOS/OPTN. Through this oversight, more transplant centers and DSAs may become more comfortable with this novel approach to increase living kidney donation. OPTN/UNOS oversight will also ensure that no particular blood group will be potentially negatively impacted by this practice.

Implementation of these recommendations will further increase the opportunities for live kidney paired donation in particular, and may provide increased access to a transplant, particularly in the highly sensitized patient. Such a system would also develop a foundation on which altruistic / non-directed donors could donate an organ or part of an organ, with better oversight and protection for the donor, the recipients, and the transplant center.

Adopted May 2006