

HEALTHCARE WORKER ATTITUDES ON LIVING DONATION PRIOR TO PLANNED WITHDRAWAL OF CARE

Luo, Claire¹, Smruti Rath², Laura Washburn³, Matthew B Price², Priyanka Moolchandani², Matthew Goss⁴, Abbas Rana², John Goss², Nhu Thao Nguyen Galvan²

¹ Baylor College of Medicine, Department of Surgery, Transplant Services

² Baylor College of Medicine, Surgery, Transplant Services

³ University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Surgery, Transplant Services

⁴ McGovern Medical School, Surgery, Transplant Services

Keywords:

Background: This study aims to assess the attitudes of physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners in transplant and critical care towards Living Donation Prior to Withdrawal of Care (LD-PPW), defined as the recovery of a living donor organ prior to withdrawal of life-sustaining measures in a patient who does not meet criteria for brain death, but for whom medical care towards meaningful recovery has been deemed futile.

Materials/Methods: In response to a LD-PPW case scenario involving a hypothetical LD-PPW donor ("Jason"), administered via electronic survey through the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) mailing list, participants responded via a 5-point Likert scale regarding his donation eligibility. Participant support of LD-PPW broadly was queried, including its relation to key ethical principles. 1,735 healthcare workers received the survey, with 187 total complete responses (10.8% response rate).

Results: Compared to previously published data surveying public perception of LD-PPW, data gathered by this study suggests that LD-PPW would be met with similar levels of support from the professional community, with 71% and 77% of practitioners indicating support for LD-PPW due to principles of beneficence and autonomy respectively. 70% felt that LD-PPW should be added as an option when registering to become an organ donor (Figure 1).

Conclusions: This study was initiated because donation after cardiac declaration of death does not satisfy the current need for organ donation and transplantation, as nearly half of all DCDD do not proceed to organ donation. LD-PPW has been proposed as an alternative to increase the quality and quantity of transplantable organs while respecting the donor's right to donate, though its implementation has been hindered by concerns over public and provider perception. This study revealed strong support for LD-PPW among healthcare practitioners, reaffirming previously published data of strong support within the public. Continued research regarding a formalized process for LD-PPW is necessary.

Images / Graph / Table

Figure 1: survey responses

