
For immediate release

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**St. John's Hospital and Memorial Medical Center receive
honors for commitment to organ & tissue donation**

ELMHURST, Ill. (November 12, 2008) – St. John's Hospital recently was honored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network for its work in saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation.

In addition, St. John's Hospital and Memorial Medical Center were recognized by Gift of Hope as top tissue donor hospitals. St. John's worked with 30 tissue donors and their families, and Memorial Medical Center worked with 26 tissue donors and their families between June 2007 and June 2008.

"These hospitals are leaders in our donation service area," said Dave Bosch, Gift of Hope Director of Communications. "By supporting families, working with Gift of Hope to facilitate a smooth donation process, and building community awareness of the need for donation, they have created an environment supportive of donation."

The Medal of Honor is awarded to 413 hospitals from across the country for exemplary leadership and commitment to organ donors, donor families, and the 100,000 patients on the national transplant waiting list.

These winners represent hospitals with eight or more potential organ donors during the 26-month award period, ending in June 2008, that sustained a donation rate of 75 percent or higher from among eligible donors for at least a year. The percentage reflects the rate at which potential donors at the time of death actually become lifesaving donors.

HHS and the Boston-based Institute for Healthcare Improvement established the 75 percent goal in April 2003 as part of an ongoing national initiative called the Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative. Through it, organ procurement organizations like Gift of Hope, hospitals and key national healthcare leaders share and apply best practices to their work with potential donors, their families and the donation process. The Collaborative's success has directly contributed to the continuing increase in the number of organs transplanted each year since 2003. In 2007, 28,357 patients received transplants, compared with 25,472 in 2003.

Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network is proud to serve as the federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization (OPO) that coordinates organ and tissue donation and services to families of donors in the northern three-quarters of Illinois and northwest Indiana. Since its inception in 1986, Gift of Hope has coordinated donations that have saved the lives of more than 14,000 organ transplant recipients, and improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of tissue transplant recipients. As one of 58 organ procurement organizations that make up the nation's organ donation system, Gift of Hope works with 183 hospitals and serves 11.7 million residents in its donation service area.