

June 8, 2005

Dear Colleague;

As physicians we are all used to helping patients solve their medical problems. Last year I found myself powerless in helping my own family solve theirs. My granddaughter, Shay Ziff, was born with a rare heart condition called restrictive cardiomyopathy and would die unless she had a heart transplant. Like many, I was uneducated on the issue of organ donation and the many misconceptions and difficulties recipients and donors face. Without the generosity and understanding of her donor family, we would not have our loveable little granddaughter today. Since that time my family has been dedicated to educating others about the need for organ donation and how to sign up as a donor.

Unfortunately, organ donation is not well publicized in this country and individuals who are in a position to make the choices are not always aware of their options. Only 8% of Michigan residents are signed up on the donor registry, making Michigan one of the lowest in the country (the national average is 40%). Currently we have over 2,700 people in our state waiting for transplants. Last year, 150 people in Michigan died waiting. If each physician's office in this state helps sign up 1 patient per week, we will double the list of donors in one year.

Recently, the Oakland County Medical Society decided to join the efforts of Gift of Life Michigan, which acts as an intermediary between the donor hospital and the recipient transplant center providing all the services necessary for organ and tissue donation, as well as promoting organ donation, and now we're asking for your help. You can help OCMS in this partnership by making information available to your patients in your office.

A complete list of materials, available to you at no charge, is enclosed in this letter. To get the ball rolling you can go to www.giftoflifemichigan.org and sign up to be an organ donor yourself. For more information, please contact OCMS at (248) 646-4700.

Sincerely,

Stanley Dorfman MD
Chair, OCMS/Gift of Life Organ Donation Promotion Project

Enclosures