

# Deaths Under Investigation

## Preserving evidence & opportunity for donation

Procedures described in the *Shared Protocol for Organ Recovery in Deaths Under Investigation* ensure all families may have the opportunity for organ and tissue donation whenever possible. Organs that are not damaged can be transplanted without undermining the collection of important forensic evidence and its delivery to counties involved.

### Gift of Hope's role

- Follow each step listed in the *Shared Protocol for Organ Recovery in Deaths Under Investigation*.
- Contact Partner Relations if not already involved
- Follow each step in the *Shared Protocol*
- Request that the hospital quarantine all available blood and tissue samples. If there is a prior admission facility, contact that facility as well.
- As appropriate, inform the family that Gift of Hope and the Medical Examiner (ME)/Coroner and Forensic Pathologist will follow a written protocol to preserve forensic evidence and decide how to proceed with donation.
- Lead a conference call among parties involved to collaborate as necessary

### State's Attorney office's role

- Call Gift of Hope at (800) 545-GIFT if they are not already involved.
- Participate in discussions with Gift of Hope and the ME/Coroner's Office to ensure proper collection of forensic evidence.

### ME/Coroner's role

- Call Gift of Hope at (800) 545-GIFT if they are not already involved.
- Review and follow the *Shared Protocol for Organ Recovery in Deaths Under Investigation*.
- Confirm that Gift of Hope has requested that the hospital quarantine all available blood and tissue samples, including samples from transfer hospitals.

- Inform Gift of Hope of any special requests for testing or imaging.
- Collaborate with Gift of Hope to ensure proper collection of forensic evidence.
- As appropriate, inform the family that Gift of Hope and the ME/Coroner and Forensic Pathologist will follow a written protocol to preserve forensic evidence and decide how to proceed with donation.

### Hospital staff's role

- Call Gift of Hope at (800) 545-GIFT with referral of potential donor.
- Quarantine all blood and tissue specimens.
- Maintain mechanical support until Gift of Hope provides further direction, as required by CMS.
- Attending physician participates in a case review if requested by Gift of Hope and the ME/Coroner's Office.

### Law enforcement's role

- Call Gift of Hope at (800) 545-GIFT if they are not already involved.
- As appropriate, inform the family that Gift of Hope, the ME/Coroner and Forensic Pathologist will follow a written protocol to preserve forensic evidence and decide how to proceed with donation.
- Participate in collaborative discussions with Gift of Hope, ME/Coroner's office and State's Attorney to ensure proper collection of forensic evidence.