



spotlight on health

A Different Kind Of Giving

(NAPSA)—As trusted messengers in their community, members of the faith community have a unique opportunity to educate their congregations about the life-giving benefits of organ donation. For some individuals who are accident victims or suffering from a life-threatening disease, organ, eye, and tissue donation is “the gift of life.”

With more than 112,000 people in the United States waiting for lifesaving organ transplants, the need for a compassionate, committed organ donor base is urgent. And faith communities are a great place to start the conversation about organ, eye, and tissue donation.

Here are some simple ways in which you can help:

- Encourage your faith leader to share the urgent need. Members of your congregation may be unaware of the need, or of their ability to save lives of people waiting for transplants.

- Find out how to register as an organ, eye, and tissue donor in your state, and provide that information to your faith community.

- Talk to your faith leader about participating in National Donor Sabbath, which takes place the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday two weekends before Thanksgiving. It is a special time designated to bring attention to the precious gift of donation. This annual recognition is supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and national and local organ, eye, and tissue organizations.

- Hold a candlelight ceremony or other commemorative event to



Your faith community can help others through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

honor those who have donated the gift of life and to recognize those men, women, and children who are waiting for a lifesaving transplant.

- Arrange educational workshops for your congregation to discuss this sensitive topic. Your local organ procurement organization, Donate Life America chapter and HRSA's Division of Transplantation are excellent resources for appropriate support and materials.

- If the members of your faith community cannot schedule a program about donation during National Donor Sabbath, ask them to select another time that is good for them. The need for donors is ongoing. Any time is a good time to talk about saving lives.

If you would like to learn more about organ, eye, and tissue donation and your faith community, talk to your local faith leaders or visit www.organdonor.gov. This site also offers more ideas on how to start the donation conversation in your place of worship, contact information for local donation organizations and information on how to register as a donor in your state.