



Organ Donation & Transplantation Among Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian, and other Communities of Color:

- Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian, and other communities of color are facing a public health crisis and are in desperate need of more organ, eye and tissue donors.
- These communities of color make up more than 40% of the U.S. population but comprises 60% of individuals on the national organ transplant waiting list. Most people are not aware that a large number of individuals (more than 63,000) from these communities are waiting for a transplant and many are in need of a kidney (more than 58,000).
- Nearly 2,200 of our Northwest neighbors are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, 38% of which are from one of these communities.
- This disparity happens for a number of reasons, including:
 - Many of the conditions leading to the need for a transplant – such as diabetes and hypertension – occur with greater frequency among these populations.
 - For example, Black or African Americans are three times more likely to suffer from end-stage renal disease than Caucasians.
 - Although it's possible for a candidate to match a donor from another ethnic group, transplant success rates increase when organs are matched between members of the same ethnic background.
 - 25% of donors are people of color. In order to increase transplantation opportunities in these communities, more people of color should consider registering to become organ donors.
- Many patients don't know their options when it comes to being added to the transplant wait list. We need to continue to advocate for patients of color and make sure our communities are medically supported with these decisions.
- A national database and strict federal, regional and local systems are in place to ensure ethical and equitable distribution of organs. Organs are allocated based on the recipient's blood type, body size, medical urgency, length of time on the waiting list and proximity to transplant center.
- It should be shared that most major religions in the U.S. support organ, eye and tissue donation as one of the highest expressions of compassion and generosity.
- Donated organs are removed surgically in an operation similar to open heart surgery. Following surgery, the donor is returned to the family for a funeral or cremation based on their preference. Donation does not change the appearance of the body for a funeral service.
- Mistrust of the health care system is widely known due to a history of discriminating behavior in the medical profession. Our goal is to provide accurate information in partnership with communities of color to increase trust and make a positive impact on this health crisis.
- Be sure to register your decision to be an organ donor at the DMV or online at www.lcnw.org and then talk to your family about your decision to donate!