

DCD Overview

For Operating Room Staff



Donation after cardiac death (DCD) happens when patients have catastrophic injuries and require life support systems to maintain their bodies physiologically, but they are not brain dead.



PROCESS

The donor is brought into the OR and prepared for recovery. The donor is extubated and life support is stopped. The donor is kept comfortable through usual hospital comfort care protocols. Organ recovery begins following declaration of death and a wait period of 5 minutes. If the donor does not pass within the DCD timeframe, he or she is transported back to the ICU to continue comfort care measures.



FAMILY

The donor's family may choose to be present for the withdrawal process. Family members will be dressed in OR PPE and educated on OR etiquette. Following declaration of death, the family is escorted out of the OR.



RECOVERY

Organ recovery begins following the declaration of death and the required wait period. If the donor does not pass within the DCD timeframe, the donor is transported back to the ICU to continue comfort care measures.

Donor OR Preparation

- The OR must be prepared for the expeditious and simultaneous removal of several major organs from the donor.
- Southern Legacy of Life (SLL) team will work with OR staff to coordinate the room and instruments for the case prior to the OR.
- The hospital assigns a nurse to circulate in the room and a surgical technologist to scrub in.
- SLL will provide a list of surgical instruments needed.

Donor OR Time Out

SLL Organ Recovery Coordinator will conduct a time out to confirm:

1. The donor's UNOS number
2. Blood type
3. Risk factors
4. Organs to be recovered

During the time out:

- SLL will ask for a moment of silence to honor the donor's selfless decision to save the lives of others.
- If additional information is required during the time out per hospital policy, hospital staff can include it at this time.

Questions?

Reach out to your Hospital Development Team.

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