



## **STATEMENT ON DIRECTED DONATION and SOLICITATION OF ORGANS**

**October 23, 2006**

The ASTS believes and reaffirms our position that living and deceased organ donation represents altruistic acts. The ASTS believes that a transplant surgeon should not be compelled to participate in a transplant that he or she believes is ethically improper.

### **1. Deceased Donor Organs**

- a. The ASTS supports the directed donation of deceased donor organs to individual family members, friends, and individuals in which there is a pre-established relationship. In the absence of a wait-listed family member or friend, organ donation should proceed according to the standard policies and procedures of the organ procurement organization (OPO) and the allocation policies of the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS).
- b. The ASTS is strongly opposed to the solicitation of deceased donor organs by recipients or their agents, whether this is through personal or commercial websites, billboards, media outlets or other forms of advertising when the intent of such solicitation is to redirect the donation to a specific individual rather than according to the fair policies of allocation (UNOS policy on organ allocation) which all members on the waiting list abide by. We believe that such solicitation and the resultant directed donation will undermine the trust and fairness on which the system of organ transplantation depends. Society, in particular potential recipients and their families, must believe that the current organ allocation system is protected from discriminatory practices that will disadvantage certain classes of individuals. The ASTS recommends that its membership not participate in deceased donor transplants in which solicitation has driven a directed donation.

### **2. Living Donor Organs**

- a. Non-directed living donation
  1. The ASTS supports "Good Samaritan" live organ donation to a recipient list when the donation is in accordance with publicly disclosed organizational standards which preserve equity and justice in allocation to patients on the waiting list.

2. Issues of solicitation are not applicable in this situation

b. Directed donation with or without solicitation

1. Participation in directed donation may take place between the donor and recipient when there is a relationship through family and communities (school, place of worship, place of employment or other organizations). Most commonly these relationships were formed and matured prior to a known need for transplantation. These situations can be considered traditional directed living donors and have made up an ever growing and widely accepted form of transplantation.
2. Non-traditional Situations: Participation in directed donation can also take place when the relationship has originated as a result of a person's need for transplantation. It may have resulted from direct or non-direct solicitation by the recipient. The solicitation may have been to family members, friends, acquaintances or strangers and may have been done directly or indirectly through community groups or via internet websites. In so far as these solicited directed donors will add an additional scarce resource, there are ethical grounds to proceed with these types of transplants as long as the motivation is based in altruism and there are well defined safeguards regarding informed consent and evaluation in the transplant centers performing them that insure safety for the donor, the recipient, the transplant center and the community. The ASTS is working with other professional transplant organizations to provide transplant centers with guidelines for procedures and practices to best assure that these types of transplants proceed with maximum safety.