



November 14, 2013

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Howard Koh, MD, MPH
Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Thomas Frieden, MD, MPH
Director
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

The Honorable Mary K. Wafefield, PhD, RN
Administrator
U.S. Health Resources and Services Admin
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

The Honorable Ronald O. Valdiserri, MD, MPH
Deputy Assist Secretary for Health, Infectious Disease
Director, Office of HIV/AIDS and I.D. Policy
Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Mr. Robert Walsh
Director
Division of Transplantation
U.S. Health Resources and Services Admin
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Re: PHS Guideline Development for Encephalitis Transmission in Transplantation

Dear Secretary Sebelius, Assistant Secretary Koh, Director Frieden, Deputy Assistant Secretary Valdiserri, and Administrator Wakefield

On behalf of the American Society of Transplantation (AST) and the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), representing the majority of professionals engaged in the field of organ transplantation, we continue to applaud your commitment to strengthening our nation's transplant system. We also remain grateful for your ongoing collaborative efforts and regular dialogue with AST, ASTS, and the broader transplant community.

We write to you today to request the formal participation of our organizations and others in the proposed development of a guideline addressing the potential transmission of encephalitis through organ transplantation. We recognize the importance of constantly reviewing our practices to optimize the safety of our field of medicine. In the context of communicable disease, we also know that organ transplantation requires a careful balancing of concerns related to patient safety on the one hand and organ access on the other. The CDC and the transplant community faced this issue most recently in the context of the development of the revised guideline on the transmission of HIV, HBV and HCV through organ transplantation, and we believe that the process used to adopt that guideline would have been improved by broader participation and improved communication from the inception of the process.

AST and ASTS welcome the opportunity to work with CDC in developing the proposed encephalitis guideline, and we believe that we have considerable expertise that could be of assistance in reaching the appropriate balance

between patient safety and organ availability in this area. We also urge the agency to consider including representatives of HRSA in the process, to ensure that HHS' interest in maximizing access to transplantable organs is represented as the guideline is drafted.

We look forward to continuing this dialogue with you and offering our expertise as HHS and CDC work toward the development of a PHS guideline for encephalitis transmission.

Best Regards,

Handwritten signature of Daniel R. Salomon, M.D.

Daniel R. Salomon, MD
President
American Society of Transplantation

Handwritten signature of Alan N. Langnas

Alan N. Langnas, D.O.
President
American Society of Transplant Surgeons