



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE
FOR EMERGENCY MEDICINE

POLICY

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POLICY ON ORGAN DONATION

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document is a policy of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and relates to organ donation and the care of potential organ donors in the emergency department (ED).

The policy is applicable to EDs in general.

2. POLICY

ACEM supports the principle of human organ transplantation from recently deceased individuals to living human recipients.

Emergency physicians should identify patients who are potential organ donors. This process must not influence decisions regarding resuscitation nor the continuing management of the patient.

3. PROCEDURE AND ACTIONS

Fellowship of ACEM should be included in government regulation as being a recognised critical care medical qualification that empowers the holder with the authority to perform the determination of brain death. This is important in facilities with no intensive care specialists.

The position of "Designated Officer" is an administrative position that exists to authorise removal of organs. The role of "Designated Officer" should not be imposed upon emergency physicians without their consent.

The Intensive Care Unit, rather than the ED, is the appropriate facility for the diagnosis of brain death and the subsequent organ donation process.

The maintenance of a potential donor for organ procurement should never compromise the care of other patients.

4. DATES AND NOTES

Approved by Council: March 2004

Last reviewed and approved: July 2011

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