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UT Southwestern University Hospital's transplant program recognized for increasing organ donor rates

DALLAS – Jan. 6, 2009 – The surgical transplant team at UT Southwestern University Hospital has garnered twin awards for its successful efforts to increase organ donation rates.

"Each organ donation is an opportunity for new life, so we are gratified with these recognitions," said Dr. Juan Arenas, chief of surgical transplantation and surgical director for the liver transplant program.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) presented UT Southwestern University Hospital – Zale Lipshy the prestigious Medal of Honor for Organ Donation for achieving and sustaining a donation rate of 75 percent or more among eligible donors. The award was presented during the Fourth National Learning Congress on Organ Donation and Transplantation, held in Nashville, Tenn. Of the 716 hospitals surveyed nationwide, 412 received the honor, including 27 in Texas.

The Southwest Transplant Alliance also honored UT Southwestern, along with 11 other hospitals, for surpassing the goal of 75 percent of potential donors becoming actual donors.

To earn the award, the hospital had to receive eight or more potential organ donors over a 26-month period and sustain a donation rate of at least 75 percent among eligible donors. A total of 631 hospitals have earned the medal since it was created in 2004.

UT Southwestern's affiliated hospitals – Parkland Memorial Hospital and Children's Medical Center Dallas – also were honored by HHS and the Southwest Transplant Alliance.

The waiting list of those in need of an organ recently surpassed 100,000, as the gap between patients who need transplants and the number of organs donated continues to grow.

Visit <http://www.utsouthwestern.org/transplants> to learn more about transplant clinical services at UT Southwestern.

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