



HONOR WALK SAMPLE POLICY

Purpose:

Honor walks are established to provide families of intended organ donors, as well as the medical care teams, the opportunity to honor the generosity of the donor and family for making the decision to share the gifts of life. These occur when the donor is transported from the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to the Operating Room (OR) at the time of organ recovery.

Policy:

[Hospital Name] staff lead the practice of Honor Walks for those families wishing to participate with the support of LifeSource. Honor Walks are optional and require the consent of the family. All patients meeting criteria for organ donation where authorization or donor designation has been established are eligible for an Honor Walk.

Procedure:

- 1) When appropriate in the care of a patient deemed eligible for organ donation where authorization/donor designation is present, [Hospital staff or LifeSource designee] will provide education on the Honor Walk and offer the family the opportunity to honor their loved one through this practice.
- 2) The decision of the family or legal next of kin will be documented [designate where in the patient chart or if using a specific consent form] by the [Hospital staff or if requested by the hospital, a LifeSource designee], and communicated to the hospital and LifeSource teams. If the family declines, no further action is necessary. If the family accepts, continue to step 3.
- 3) [Hospital staff or if requested by the hospital, a LifeSource designee] will communicate the family has affirmed and consented to proceed with an Honor Walk to [Hospital staff in charge of coordinating the Honor Walk] via [email/phone number].
- 4) [Hospital staff in charge of coordinating the Honor Walk] will communicate that there will be an Honor Walk to [those hospital staff deemed appropriate to invite: could be hospital leadership, those involved in the care team, security, chaplaincy: consider creating an email list that is easily accessible within the hospital's email system] with time and location of the Honor Walk. [Hospital] staff should seek approval from their manager to attend the Honor Walk and coordinate with their units to establish appropriate coverage of their duties. Patient safety is always first.

Note: delays are common at this critical part of the donation process: LifeSource coordinators will communicate with [Hospital staff in charge of coordinating the Honor Walk] to update those invited to attend if there are timing or location changes.

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5) Hospital staff will gather for the Honor Walk at established time and location.

[Outline Hospital's specific policy regarding photography/video documentation.] Some examples to consider:

- Out of respect for the family, hospital employees may not be allowed to take photos or video of the Walk of Honor.
- The donor's loved ones may conduct their own videotaping and/or photographing of the ceremony.
- The donor's family may request someone video/photograph on their behalf. Consider who might be able to accommodate and potentially outline in the policy.
- [Hospital] may only use videos or photography with the expressed written consent of the donor's legal next of kin.
- Due diligence will be taken to protect the confidentiality of other patients.
- ICU team members or other departmental staff uncomfortable with the potential of being in the family's video, can elect to not participate in the Walk.
- Consider the removal of name tags or identifiable labeling during media coverage to protect privacy aspect of hospital setting.

[Consider an outline of specific guidance for those in attendance.] Some examples to consider:

- Hospital Staff will line up in two parallel lines from the ICU to the OR as the Donor Patient is being transported to the OR/elevators.
- Family and friends will be allowed to follow the Donor Patient to the OR while the Honor Walk is occurring.
- Security will be available throughout the process to assist with any problems that might arise.
- Each participant to be aware the atmosphere of quiet respect should initiate at the time of arrival to the hallway all the way through to the concluding moments.

6) When the Honor Walk has commenced, [designated hospital staff coordinating the Honor Walk] to thank those in attendance for their participation.

7) Participants return to their hospital roles. [Consider the creation of a clear ending point or time of dispersing.]

Note: Due to a variety of circumstances that may arise intra-op, not all patients honored through this practice will be able to donate their organs for transplant or research. The Honor Walk honors the decision of the patient and/or family, and their intent to donate.

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