



Heartland Health

Heartland Regional Medical Center awarded Medal of Honor for Organ Donation

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Heartland Regional Medical Center (HRMC) received the 2006 Medal of Honor for Organ Donation from the US Department of Health and Human Services for the second year in a row. Hospitals with eight or more potential organ donors during a 26-month award period ending in June of 2006 were eligible for the Medal of Honor. All recognized hospitals had to achieve and sustain a donation rate of 75 percent or more from eligible donors for at least a year. HRMC was one of 371 winning hospitals from a pool of 787 hospitals that met eligibility criteria. Elizabeth Duke, administrator for the US Department of Health and Human Services states, "The work of these hospitals and their organ procurement organizations made possible 1200 more life-saving and life-enhancing transplants in 2005 compared to 2004."

On October 29, Jim Steele, RN, Emergency Room and Jeanie Joyce, RN, Critical Care, attended the Second National Learning Congress on Organ Donation and Transplantation in New Orleans, La. to receive the award on behalf of HRMC. Joyce states, "Being at the conference to receive the award was an awesome experience! I wish that everyone at Heartland could have been there to receive the award. There were so many touching stories about the lives that have been saved because of organ donation." Steele says, "I was impressed by the large number of people throughout the United States and Canada who demonstrate such strong passion for their work in the organ donation process."

Roxanne Shanks, administrative representative for the Organ and Tissue committee states, "This award would not be possible without the collaboration of the Spiritual Health staff, Critical Care staff, Emergency Department staff, Operating room staff, and Trauma Services. Because of their continued dedication and support of this process, more lives are saved through organ donation." An organ, tissue and eye donation committee meets monthly at HRMC to review results and work to improve processes in organ, tissue and eye donation. Heartland Health President and CEO Lowell C. Kruse, recognizes the importance of this effort: "Organ, tissue and eye donation is an incredible gift to persons in need. One donor may save fifty lives. I am very proud of the staff at Heartland Regional Medical Center who works with families giving consent for donation. It is a personal honor to receive this award for a second year."