

# US policy that gives priority to prior organ donors who need a transplant is working

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Prior organ donors who later need a kidney transplant experience brief waiting times and receive excellent quality kidneys, according to a study appearing in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology (JASN)*. The findings indicate that a US policy that gives priority to prior organ donors on the transplant waiting list is working.

Live [organ donors](#) provide a remarkable gift to relieve another person of the burden of organ failure. While most live kidney donors enjoy excellent health after kidney donation, recent research has revealed that kidney donation is linked with an increased risk of developing [kidney failure](#).

Because of the gift of [kidney donation](#), prior live organ donors receive priority on the [kidney transplant](#) waiting list. Peter Reese, MD MSCE (University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine), Vishnu Potluri, MD, MPH (Lankenau Medical Center), and their colleagues looked to see whether the current national kidney allocation policy was succeeding in its goal of minimizing waiting time to transplant for people who had once donated an organ. The researchers analyzed prior organ donors and matched non-donors who were wait-listed during the years 1996 to 2010.

"The research reveals that, fortunately, these donors did not wait a long time for their kidney transplants and received high quality kidneys," said Dr. Reese. Prior organ donors had much shorter waiting time to receive a kidney transplant, and they received better quality kidneys compared

with similar people on the waiting list who had not donated an organ. "This study shows that the policy is working: prior organ donors get rapid access to high quality organs. After transplant, their survival is excellent compared with similar people who were not organ donors," said Dr. Reese. He noted, however, that most prior organ donors needed dialysis before they received their transplant. Ideally, these prior donors would have received [kidney](#) transplants before they ever needed dialysis.

**More information:** The article, entitled "Kidney Transplant Outcomes for Prior Living Organ Donors," will appear online at [jasn.asnjournals.org/](http://jasn.asnjournals.org/) on November 20, 2014.

Provided by American Society of Nephrology

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