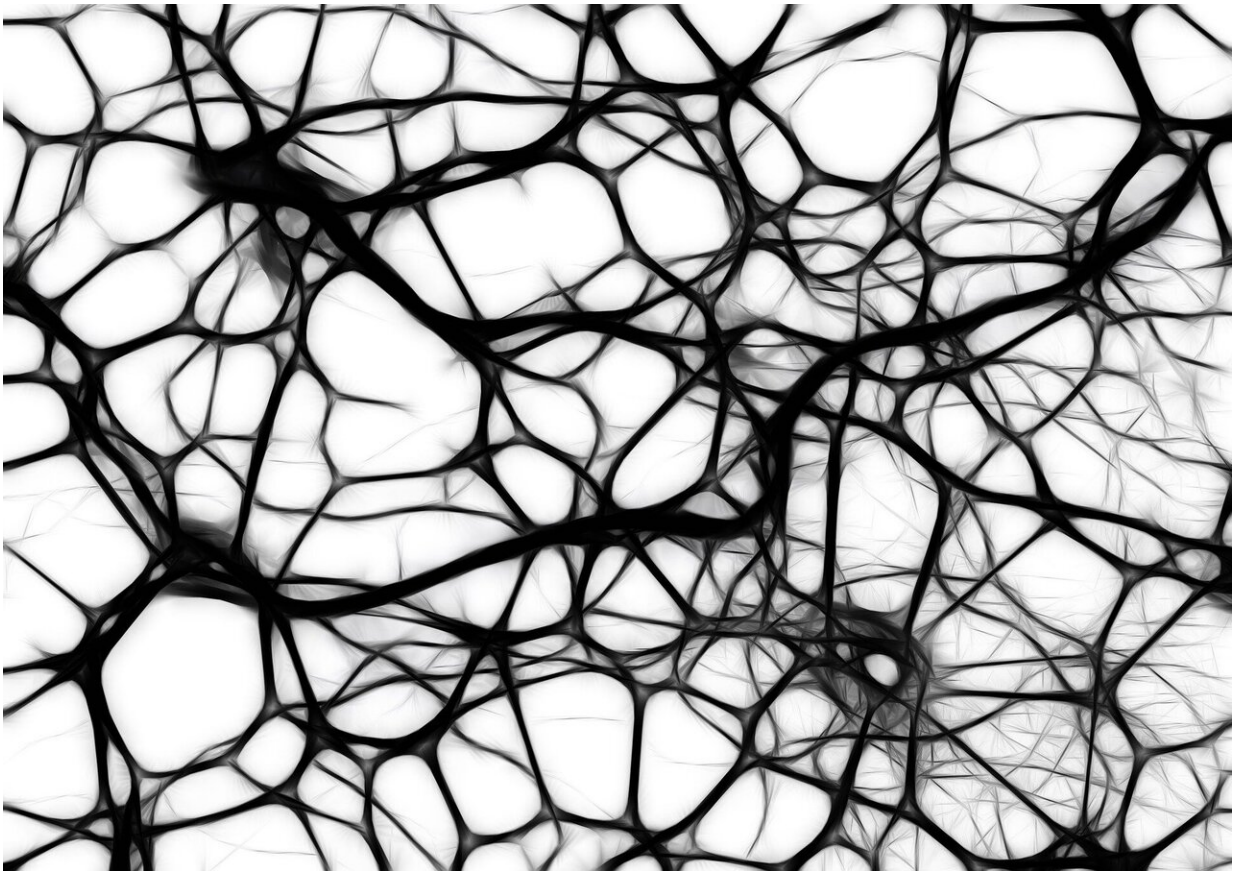


Videos can spur family members to donate tissues, improve lives

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More than 60 percent of people who die in the United States have not given consent for their tissues to be donated; receiving consent from next

of kin can improve access to donor tissues. A new study examined two different videos on tissue donation, finding that both videos encouraged willingness to donate, but it was the informational content in the videos, not emotional connectivity, that spurred family members' interest.

The study, by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Dartmouth, appears in *Production and Operations Management*.

"We identified a low-cost, easy-to-implement intervention that could improve the availability of tissues across the United States," suggests Sridhar Tayur, Professor of Operations Management at CMU's Tepper School of Business, who coauthored the study. "An approach that focuses on next of kin offers a new opportunity to raise overall tissue donation rates."

Donating tissues after the death of just one person can improve the lives of dozens of people who receive corneas, skin, and other tissues.

Although there is a significant and ongoing effort to boost first-person [consent](#) through donation registration drives, in Nevada, where this study was done, almost 70 percent of people do not give consent. Researchers focused on consent from next of kin, who can provide permission when the decedent has not given consent.

Researchers investigated whether the willingness of next of kin to donate decedents' tissues could be improved by viewing a [video](#) sent to the family member after they received an initial call from a donor coordinator. Between mid-2017 and mid-2018, almost 3,000 decedents in Nevada were considered for tissue donation, with more than 2,700 next of kin approached to seek consent.

In this study, 535 [family members](#) were randomly assigned to watch one of two short videos, both available in English and Spanish: One was an

animated, freely available video on the benefits and process of tissue donation that was developed by the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The other was a customized video made in partnership with the Nevada Donor Network that featured interviews with families who had donated a family member's tissues or received donated tissues.

The study focused on the effect of the videos on donations by White next of kin. In the United States, many historical factors (e.g., distrust of institutions, historical exploitation) make the kind of simple intervention that was the feature of this study unlikely to be sufficient to encourage donation by non-White kin.

Next of kin were more likely to donate their loved one's tissues if they viewed either video, but the two videos were not statistically different in their effect. Because people willing to view a video on tissue donation may have been predisposed to provide consent, researchers performed an additional experiment online, which yielded parallel results.

Participants who were not predisposed to grant permission said both videos provided information, while the interview-based video also offered emotional support. The authors suggest that the informational content of the videos was the reason for the positive impact on family members' willingness to donate.

The authors suggest that future studies address interventions that can increase consent by non-White next of kin.

"Beyond this application, our results have implications for service [operations management](#), especially [health care](#)," says Jonathan Kush, Assistant Professor of Management at the UMass Dartmouth's Charlton College of Business, who led the study. "Persuasive marketing tactics have long been studied and vaccine hesitancy is currently a topic of great

interest, highlighting the importance of taking a closer look at behavioral strategies to increase acceptance of public health measures such as [tissue](#) donation, vaccination, and tobacco cessation."

More information: Jonathan Kush et al, Video intervention to increase decedent tissue donation by next-of-kin, *Production and Operations Management* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/poms.13679](https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.13679)

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