

07 May 2018

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Dear Mr Kingston,

### **ANZICS statement on death and organ donation**

The ASA welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the ANZICS statement on death and organ donation. This document has been discussed amongst the ASA committees and senior anaesthetists involved in this area.

Overall this is an excellent document, which specifies the definitions of death, the process involved, delineation of roles, the importance of communication with families and of obtaining and documenting consent.

It is useful to understand the medical management of patients after brain death. Section 2.3.2 clarifies the physiological objectives for the anaesthetist and the role for using neuromuscular blocking agents, volatiles and opiates to prevent spinal reflex movements and ablate sympathetic responses.

The donor must receive appropriate end of life care. The decision to withdraw treatment and the determination of death should be made independently of any consideration of donation and the transplantation or retrieval team, (which may include the anaesthetist), should not be involved. Potential conflicts of interest need to have been considered and minimised.

#### Section 2.4.6

There may be more detail added here about the planning meeting:

1. Introductions of all staff which may include surgeons, anaesthetists and retrieval staff from other hospitals not familiar with the local hospital and staff.
2. Consent. The 'time-out' of surgical consent should be viewed and discussed at the planning meeting prior to patient arriving in theatre.
3. Details about which organs are to be donated.

4. Specifics about which different teams will be involved, what is the surgical plan for donation and what are the physiological requirements.
5. For a potential lung donor requiring re-intubation, the anaesthetist must have details of any anticipated difficulties and a plan for airway management.
6. Location of death. Dying in theatre is not the preferred option as it compromises provision of best end of life care to the patient and their family.

The ASA supports the development of local protocols to provide guidance for staff. The importance of providing on going culturally sensitive support for the families and staff is stated.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the ASA Policy Officer Elaine Tieu on [etieu@asa.org.au](mailto:etieu@asa.org.au) or by phone (02) 8556 9716.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Antonio Grossi**  
Professional Issues Advisory Committee  
Chair

