

Measure at a Glance

CBE #5603: Authorization Rate for Organ Donation Among Approached, Referred Potential Organ Donors in the Organ Procurement Organization's Donation Service Area in a Calendar Year

Measure Summary (Where does this measure seek to improve care?)

This measure looks at how often organ donation is approved by a potential donor or their family after they have a conversation with an organ procurement organization (OPO, a nonprofit group that manages organ donation in a specific area).

Hospitals refer possible donors to OPOs, and staff review medical suitability before speaking with families. These conversations are sensitive and happen during difficult times.

The measure counts how many approvals happen for every 100 conversations (called approaches) about donation in one calendar year. It includes both potential donors and their next of kin, who may make decisions.

A higher score means a higher rate of approval, which indicates better performance on this measure.

The measure may help OPOs understand how well their process works.

Meaningfulness (Why does this matter to patients, and how could it improve their care?)

OPOs agreed that converting potential donors into actual donors is a key area to measure. Tracking approval rates may help OPOs evaluate and better understand how they conduct donation discussions.

Researchers also collected feedback from families, patients, and stakeholders. Some families reported challenges such as paperwork or limited support. At the same time, many families described positive interactions with OPO staff. These findings show that donation decisions are emotional and that communication, training, and support affect the experience for families.

Usability (How will providers use this measure to improve care delivery?)

This measure gives OPOs a clear way to track how often organ donations are authorized after conversations with families.

OPOs may use this information to:

- Better understand how their processes work.
- Evaluate their performance over time.
- Identify where change may be needed and guide improvement efforts.
- Examine outcomes by different groups, such as donor type.

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- Compare against other OPOs.
- Compare results across different groups, such as registered and non-registered donors.

Feasibility (How can this measure be implemented without adding burden for providers and patients while still improving care?)

This measure uses data OPOs already collect as part of their routine work. OPOs store the data in electronic systems in structured fields and perform regular quality checks to ensure the data are complete and accurate. Structured fields organize data so users can enter them in a consistent and clearly defined way. OPO staff identify missing data during routine reviews and follow up to address gaps when possible. These processes may support consistent data collection without requiring new systems.

Developers noted some challenges when they first developed the measure. OPOs and stakeholders clarified certain data elements and added coding where needed. Over time, OPOs and stakeholders also confirmed definitions and standardized how the data are recorded.

Impact (How will using this measure improve patient experiences and outcomes?)

The measure provides a way for OPOs to review authorization outcomes from their donation conversations.

The measure reports authorization rates and allows comparison across groups, such as registration status or donor type. OPOs may use this information to examine their approach conversations and identify where additional training or support may be needed.

When performance is lower, OPOs can use the results to examine possible reasons, such as communication challenges or differences in how staff approach families.

Performance Gap (Based on current performance, where and how much care can improve?)

The measure's testing data are from six OPOs between 2021 and 2024 and includes 17,114 patients ages 0-80 years who were referred while on a ventilator.

The measure reports authorization rates as the number of approvals per 100 approaches. A higher score means more approvals. The mean (average) authorization rate across the six OPOs was 59.6.

Across the six OPOs, authorization rates ranged from a low of 47 to a high of 73. This shows a performance difference of 26 points across OPOs. The variation in data shows room for improvement across OPOs, with the desired outcome of increasing the availability of organs for donation.

Disclaimer: Battelle used generative artificial intelligence in the initial drafting of this document. Actual humans with relevant expertise subsequently validated and revised the content.