

Measure at a Glance

CBE #5604: Rate of the Number of Organ Donors to the Potential Donors in an Organ Procurement Organization's donation service area in a calendar year

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

This measure calculates how often people who could donate organs become donors in an organ procurement organization (OPO) area over the course of one year. An OPO is a non-profit group that manages organ donation process.

The measure divides the number of donors by the number of people who could be donors. A donor is a person who has died, and had at least one organ recovered for transplant, even if the organ was not used. The measure includes people ages 0 to 80 years who died in a hospital, regardless of payer.

This measure helps evaluate how effectively OPOs convert potential donors into actual donors. The measure's score is calculated by dividing the number of donors by the number of potential donors in an OPO area for one year, then multiplying the result by 100 (to reflect how many people become donors out of every 100 people would have donated). A higher score means better performance.

The measure uses data from national systems to track deaths and organ donors. It excludes certain groups, such as people over age 80, people who did not die in a hospital, and people with certain serious diseases.

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

This measure may help show how well OPOs turn potential donors into actual donors. It focuses on people who could donate organs and compares them to those who do donate. The results may help OPOs understand factors that affect donation, such as hospital processes, communication with families, and system-wide influences. The measure may give a broader view of donation patterns within a service area over one year.

Stakeholders noted that current measures may not fully reflect true performance because many factors outside OPO control, such as transplant center actions and system conditions, may affect results. This measure may help OPOs better understand these influences and identify areas for improvement. OPOs also noted that clearer and more stable measures may help track changes over time and support improvement efforts.

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

OPOs can use this measure to:

- Understand their donation rate and track changes over time.
- Compare results across OPOs consistently.

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

This measure uses data already collected through national systems, including the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS), which collects death information, and Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR), which tracks organ donors and transplants. Both data sources are complete, structured, and stored electronically, with no missing information reported. This may allow OPOs to use the measure without needing to collect new data.

There are no major feasibility issues with using this measure. One possible challenge is that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) may not release hospital waiver information in time for measure calculation. However, OPOs are familiar with their service areas and their waiver hospitals, so they may estimate how missing waiver information affects their results if CMS does not release the data on time.

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

This measure may help OPOs understand factors that affect organ donation. It focuses on how often people who could be donors actually become donors. The measure provides insight into factors within a donation service area that influence donation rates. Stakeholders noted that factors such as hospital processes, staff training, and communication with families are important in organ donation activities.

Stakeholders noted that reporting donation rates may support the adoption of best practices across the organ procurement system, including improving communication and collaboration across hospitals, OPOs, and transplant centers. Lower donation rates may indicate the presence of external factors, such as reduced public trust, which may affect the number of organs donated.

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

The measure developer tested this measure using national data from the SRTR and the NVSS from January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024, across six OPOs.

The measure calculates donation rates per 100 deaths. This method shows the number of donors out of 100 potential donors, which allows fair comparison across OPOs of different sizes. It adjusts for differences in the number of deaths in each area, so OPOs with larger or smaller populations can be compared using the same scale.

The donation rates ranged from a low of 10.82 per 100 potential donors to a high of 17.82 donors per 100 potential donors across the six OPOs. The mean (average) donation rate was 13.99. The number of donors (the numerator) ranged from 523 to 2,741 people. The number of potential donors (the denominator) ranged from 4,558 to 15,800 people.

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