

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SMH PROMOTES ORGAN DONATION TO HELP SAVE LIVES**

PLYMOUTH, N.H. --- April is National Organ Donation Awareness month and Speare Memorial Hospital has joined the national campaign. Donna Toohey, nurse director of the ICU and oncology and Annie Cote, education coordinator, hung the Donate Life flag in the main entrance lobby at Speare recognizing patient families and loved ones of past donors, and to promote organ donation.

“Last year the flag went from hospital to hospital,” Toohey says, who is the hospital’s liaison to the



organ bank. “Each of the hospitals took turns honoring the donors by hanging the flag, and because we participated last year, the New England Organ Bank presented us with our own flag.”

Even though the flag is usually installed outside, Toohey and Cote decided to hang it in the lobby in hopes of creating

more awareness. “By displaying it internally we hope more people will not only see it, but ask questions and even sign up to be donors,” explains Toohey.

The flag itself stands for the continuing education and awareness for organ donation. According to the New England Organ Bank, 100,000 Americans are waiting for an organ transplant, and 6,600 die each year while waiting. Transplants can save the lives of seven people, and 950,00 tissue transplants are preformed annually from organ donation.

Organ donation saves lives and you never know when you or someone you love may need a transplant. To become an organ donor, simply indicated you want to be when renewing your driver’s license. You can also carry a signed donor card, or sign up at [www.DonateLifeNewEngland.org](http://www.DonateLifeNewEngland.org). More information is also available about organ donation at [www.neob.org](http://www.neob.org).

Speare Memorial Hospital is a 24-hour, acute care, non-profit community hospital and health care provider serving Plymouth and the communities of central New Hampshire for more than a century. Visit online at [www.spearehospital.com](http://www.spearehospital.com) and join us on Facebook.

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