

El donador en los Tiempos del Corona

(With apologies to Gabriel Garcia Márquez)

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Donor Network of Arizona

Warnings...

- Reports from China began in late December 2019
- 1st USA case identified mid-January 2020
- 1st AZ case identified 1/26/2020
- No public concern in the US until late February
- DNA closed its offices 3/16/2020

Initial operations

- Rapid change to remote services
- Daily conference calls with leadership and departments
- Reduced response to organ referrals
- Tissue processors inconsistent with acceptance
- Staff concerns

Staff Safety

- Deployed an online survey tool to guide staff on identifying illness
- Very clear guidance on prevention
- Early requirement for in-office masking
- Approximately 40 staff with confirmed COVID-19 infection
- NO intra-office transmission

Staff retention

- NO LAYOFFS
 - Some positions not replaced even today
- Hourly staff were guaranteed 80 hours per pay period through the end of 2020
- Identified areas that under-utilized staff could contribute

PPE Shuffle

- Purchasing coordinator bought all the masks he could
 - N95s restricted quickly
- Sent N95s, face shields, and goggles to all field staff
- Staff member sewed reusable multi-layer cloth masks for all staff

Settled into routine

- Non-clinical staff worked from home
- Call center, tissue recovery, HLA staff worked from office
- Organ, DFS, HD staff responded to hospitals for EOL discussions
- Quickly adapted to our new virtual reality



And this little detail...



Donors

- Quickly established communication with key contacts in hospitals
- Emphasized our commitment to keep donation happening
 - No real evidence of potential donors being de-escalated
- Identified hospitals willing to accept donor transfers if other hospitals filled up
- Attempted (without success) to identify a SDS center for donor transfers

Family care

- Staff initially restricted in hospitals
- Family visitation restricted or prohibited
- Rapid transition to phone conversations
 - 7% 4Q19 to 60% in 2Q20 (currently ~40%)
 - Overall conversion rate largely unchanged
- Increased incidence of short-notice withdrawal of support

Donor Management

- Very fast transition to testing as a requirement
- Different programs had different requirements for testing (NP vs BAL etc.)
- Initial testing slow and unreliable, thus even slower
- Required lots of senior leadership involvement

SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR Donor Testing

- Initially sending to VRL in Kansas City
- Quickly identified Mayo Clinic Hospital as a local option
- Refined the process to allow for online ordering and reporting
- Shared our need for BAL specimen testing; Mayo developed reliable system to complete it
- >400 tests to date, only one positive

Organ Allocation/Recovery

- Some centers “protected” ICU beds for expected COVID patients, leading to reduced access for transplant candidates
- Delays waiting for test results (donor and candidates)
- Reduction in elective surgeries meant LOTS of free OR time!

Other areas affected

- Referral volume up 50% year-over-year
 - Added a COVID phone option and dedicated call-taker
- Tissue and ocular age-adjusted COVID deferrals at ~50%
- New donor registrations down 30%
 - MVD closed or reduced availability for several months

Today

- 311 organ donors in 2020, decrease of 3 from 2019
- 954 organs (1,005 in 2019)
- Conversion rate 60.9% (up from 59.4%)
- Office still closed
- Staff vaccinated
- AZ infection steadily decreasing
- Light at the end of the tunnel?

We soldier on...

