

St. Vincent Medical Center Receives Silver-Level Recognition for Patient Access to Kidney-Pancreas Organ Transplant

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With the highest kidney-pancreas transplant rate and shortest wait time of any kidney-pancreas program in the state of California, St. Vincent Medical Center's Multi-Organ Transplant Center Kidney-Pancreas Program in Los Angeles has been issued the Silver-Level award for its achievements by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Multi-Organ Transplant Center (MOTC) at St. Vincent Medical Center is an internationally recognized center and has performed more than 4,000 organ transplants since 1970. With three consecutive years of awards for quality healthcare services from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), St. Vincent Medical Center has been ranked fifth among Best Hospitals in the Los Angeles Metropolitan area for 2011-2012, "high-performing" in the treatment of kidney disorders and eight other disease categories, according to U.S. News & World Report.

The surgeons and nephrologists at St. Vincent Medical Center's Multi-Organ Transplant Center work closely with an excellent multi-disciplinary healthcare team. The team of physicians, nurses, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, social workers, dietitian, pharmacists and financial counselors work to ensure the best possible care is provided during the

entire course of treatment for every patient in our kidney, pancreas, and combined kidney-pancreas programs. We assist patients with everything from financial counseling to post-transplant care.

Patients may receive a kidney and pancreas from donors who have passed away or may also receive a kidney from living donors who are willing to give the gift of life. Adults with kidney disease receive healthcare services at the MOTC before, during, and after transplantation.

Combined kidney-pancreas transplants are performed at St. Vincent Medical Center - MOTC and may be an option for select insulin dependent diabetic patients with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). In 2011, at the MOTC, 71.4 percent of patients received a kidney-pancreas transplant within six months of being placed on the wait list, as compared with 30.1 percent at other transplant centers nationwide.

As Los Angeles' first hospital, St. Vincent Medical Center has been a local pioneer in the treatment of kidney failure. Among our successes, we offered the first hospital-based hemodialysis in 1962 and the first laparoscopic donor nephrectomy (removal of a donor kidney through a very small incision) in 1999.

St. Vincent Medical Center President/CEO Cathy Fickes confirmed that the wait time for a kidney-pancreas double-organ transplant is actually lowest at St. Vincent Medical Center compared to other transplant centers in California. She credits both a great transplant team and a supportive donor community. "The patient experience is at the center of everything we do at St. Vincent's," said Fickes. "Our clinical care and support for end-stage renal disease patients is something we are consistently proud to provide. Our organ transplant team is first rate and over the last year has achieved the level of service that makes us a Silver-level transplant center."

As the transplant surgeon and medical director for the St. Vincent Multi-Organ Transplant Center, I see patients from the beginning of the process to transplantation and for many years later. Being able

to help and make a difference in someone's life that is in need of a kidney and pancreas transplant is extremely rewarding. Our program is honored to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for this Silver-level award.

"I applaud these award winners for bringing the 'gift of life' to so many," said HHS Assistant Secretary for Health Howard K. Koh, M.D., M.P.H. "Their tireless efforts to make improvements in the donation and transplantation field will continue to help save lives," adds Koh.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) at HHS supports the Donation and Transplantation Community of Practice, which brings together donation and transplantation professionals, hospital staff, and other professionals involved in the donation process to identify and share best practices.

HRSA is also in the midst of a National Hospital Organ Donation Campaign, which enlists the help of hospitals across the country in increasing the number of people who enroll as future donors on their state donor registry. Today, 56

Organ Procurement Organizations and Donate Life affiliates, 15 state hospital associations, and 653 hospitals and transplant centers were recognized for their leadership in this national campaign. If you are interested in registering as an organ/tissue donor, the California donor registry is www.donatelifecalifornia.org.

St. Vincent Medical Center's Multi-Organ Transplant Center is located at 2200 West 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA, 90057. To learn more about the Multi-Organ Transplant Center, visit: www.stvincentmedicalcenter.com or call 213-484-5551.

Dr. Robert Naraghi is a Board Certified Urologist. He is a University of Southern California (USC) Medical School graduate. Dr. Naraghi completed his Urology training and preliminary Transplant education at the University of Pittsburg. He received his post doctorate training in Kidney-pancreas Transplant Surgery from USC and St. Vincent Medical Center. Throughout his career, he has performed more than 600 kidney transplant and more than 180 kidney-pancreas transplant surgeries. Dr. Naraghi is certified by the American Society of Transplant Surgeons.

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