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Used sporting goods are displayed at the Green Boomerang Thursday, March 1, 2018.

Doctors explore lifting barriers to living organ donation

BY LAURAN NEERGAARD
AP MEDICAL WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Surgeons turned down Terra Goudge for the liver transplant that was her only shot at surviving a rare cancer. Her tumor was too advanced, they said — even though Goudge had a friend ready to donate, no matter those odds.

“I have a living donor — I’m not taking away from anyone. I’m trying to save my own life,” she pleaded. Finally, the Los Angeles woman found a hospital on the other side of the country that let the pair try. People lucky enough to receive a kidney or part of a liver from a living donor not only cut years off their wait for a transplant, but those organs also tend to survive longer. Yet living donors make up a fraction of transplants, and their numbers have plateaued amid barriers that can block otherwise willing people from giving. Among them: varying hospital policies on who qualifies and the surprising financial costs that some donors bear.

Now researchers are exploring ways to lift those barriers and ease the nation’s organ shortage.

“We just want people to be given the chance to at least entertain this as a possibility,” said Dr. Abhinav Humar, transplant chief at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where Goudge ultimately received part of friend Amy Aleck’s liver.

Thousands of people die each year waiting for an organ transplant. Nearly 14,000 are on the waiting list for a liver transplant. Of 8,082 transplants last year, just 367 were from living donors, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing, or UNOS, which oversees the nation’s transplant system. Living kidney donations are more common but still not enough to meet the need. About 95,000 people are on the kidney waiting list. Of 19,849 transplants last year, 5,811 were from living donors.

Also troubling, black and Hispanic patients are less likely than whites to receive a kidney from a living donor, and a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association earlier this year found the disparity is growing.

One hurdle is economic. The transplant recipient’s insurance pays the donor’s medical bills. But donors are out of work for weeks recuperating. The U.S. Labor Department last month made clear that a donor’s job can be protected under the Family Medical Leave Act. But that’s unpaid leave — and donors lose income if their employer doesn’t allow some form of paid time off. They also may have other expenses such as travel and hotel bills for visits to a far-away transplant center.

One study found more than a third of living kidney donors reported lost wages

in the first year following donation. The median amount was \$2,712, particularly difficult if asking economically disadvantaged friends or family for an organ.

“It’s a strange thing to tell you that donors have to pay for the privilege of donating their kidneys. I think most of us would agree that’s just fundamentally wrong,” said Dr. Paige Porrett, a surgeon with the University of Pennsylvania.

Penn is one of half a dozen transplant centers testing whether reimbursing a donor’s lost income could shorten the wait for a kidney.

“The community’s in a real bind about how we can help them,” Porrett said. “It’s a fine line that it doesn’t get misconstrued that we’re paying people for their organs.”

Another challenge: Living donation too often is considered as a last resort rather than a first choice, said Pittsburgh’s Humar — especially for liver transplants. His hospital is trying to change that and last year performed more adult liver transplants from living donors than deceased ones, a milestone.

The liver is unique, able to regenerate a few months after donors give a piece. But it is a larger and riskier operation than donating a kidney.

And that sparks an ethical debate: Many people with failing livers aren’t allowed onto the national waiting list for organs from deceased donors. That’s because the scarce supply is rationed, given only to those with the best survival chances. But what if patients who don’t qualify find a living donor? Should the donor be allowed to undergo a risky surgery if the recipient’s predicted survival isn’t quite as good?

Goudge, the California patient, had been fighting a rare condition called fibrolamellar hepatocellular carcinoma since 2001. A variety of treatments kept her cancer in check for years but eventually it overwhelmed her liver. While Goudge’s condition isn’t as aggressive as typical liver cancer, it was more advanced than transplant waiting list rules allow — and the first surgeons she consulted said living donation wasn’t an option either.

Then she stumbled onto Pitt’s program. Humar says living donation could allow transplants for many patients who otherwise would never get one — either because too many people are ahead of them on the waiting list or because they weren’t listed. After extensive evaluation of both patient and would-be donor, Humar decided Goudge had a good enough shot at prolonged survival to justify the risk to her friend. In April, his team replaced Goudge’s liver with a healthy piece of Aleck’s. Both recovered well.

“She is truly a walking miracle for me,” Goudge said.

Minnetonka police train for mental health crises

MINNETONKA, Minn. (AP) — Business cards that list services for people experiencing a mental health crisis are just one tool police in a Twin Cities suburb are using to de-escalate calls involving mentally ill people. The cards carried by Minnetonka police list four contact numbers for services that help people experiencing a mental health crisis. Researchers created the cards for a training program earlier this year in hopes it provides an accessible and effective model for de-escalation training at other Minnesota police departments, Minnesota Public Radio reported.

A law took effect last year requiring and funding de-escalation training for every officer in the state. Most other training programs come from solely a law enforcement perspective. But researchers Jillian Peterson and James Densley wanted to apply techniques to Minnetonka that were effective in other professions like teaching and nursing.

“We’ve learned a lot in the last 20

years about mental illness, about police training and about what works in crisis intervention,” Densley said.

Minnetonka is one of many cities nationwide that have seen increased crisis calls. Police are often one of the first calls for someone experiencing a mental health crisis, but officers aren’t equipped to diagnose and treat people.

“Many times when we go into these calls, we’re not able to help them and they’re unwilling to get help themselves it does get frustrating,” said Officer Patrick Eggleston. “Those are usually the ones that we end up taking multiple calls on.” Peterson and Densley introduced the officers to the social and mental health services they’d found in the community, and created a plan for how to decide which agency to contact. Chief Boerboom said officers appreciated the training connected them with resources that can help resolve situations that would have previously led to frustrating repeat calls.

Easy being green

Our friend Kermit the Frog sang of the hardships of “being the color green,” blending in with everything around you, but by the end of the song he came to the understanding that being the color green was OK and many beautiful things in life are green.

Now “being green” is an action term — meaning your actions are environmentally friendly to the earth and little to no harm is done

in the process. It’s easy to be green in Sheridan. Recycling drops are available throughout the community and curbside recycling is available through the city of Sheridan.

Glass, plastic, paper, cardboard and clippings are all easily recycled, textiles not so much. In 2012, 84 percent of unwanted clothes in the U.S. went into a landfill (Newsweek). Clothing will not “compost” even natural fibers go through an unnatural process to become clothing and will produce gas methane as they degrade. Polyester, nylon and acrylic are essentially a type of plastic and will take hundreds of years to biode-

grade.

Currently, Americans are trashing more clothes than ever. Over the past 20 years, the volume of clothing tossed has doubled from 7 million to 14 million tons, equaling 80 pounds per person (EPA). Quickly changing fashion trends and poor quality garments account for the increase in clothing turnover.

The journey of unwanted clothing in America (and Sheridan) is interesting. Sheridan is a very generous community and a number of thrift stores benefit from those donations. The Green Boomerang Thrift Store (benefits the Hub services and programs) volunteers sort through clothing and shoe donations, checking for stains, missing buttons and zippers, rips and odors. Items that do not meet store standards are then recycled to the local Salvation Army. The Salvation Army will process and bale the clothes in 1,000-pound bundles and ship to Seattle textile recyclers. In Seattle, the items are reprocessed and then shipped to Central America, where they are resold.

Clothing items not fit are recycled into cleaning rags (about 30 percent) for industrial use and 20 percent of the clothing is made into “shoddy” cut up fabric used for insulation or carpet padding. So, we are now seeing an increased attempt to recycle our ever-growing textile handoffs.

I have had the opportunity of seeing first-hand the “sales” of used clothing in both Guatemala and Nicaragua. Huge piles of clothing are brought into the central markets to be sold to the locals. Many of the women in the villages are skilled seamstresses and can mend, hem and even add local embellishments to the garments.

Amanda Munford, the manager of the Green Boomerang, and I had the opportunity to attend the National Association of Resale and Thrift Stores annual conference this June. What an experience! In the past five years, there has been an explosion of new thrift, consignment and vintage stores opening across the states. This gives the public more opportunities to recycle textiles and help a nonprofit in the process, or consign to put a few dollars back in your pocket.

Thrift has become a trend with our millennials. The “hunt” for the perfect outfit at a great deal can be exciting, especially if you find a gem. Recently, a couple came into the Green Boomerang with \$10 each. Their challenge was to buy an outfit (down to the shoes) for each other and then go out on a date sporting their “new clothes.” They had fun shopping, helped the Hub, and then had a great evening.

How can you help? Please continue donating to the local Sheridan thrift stores. Shop in our thrift stores. I take pride in telling folks, “Hey, I got this at the Green Boomerang!” Purchase less, but buy items at a higher quality. Volunteer — many of these local shops depend and rely on volunteer help and will give volunteers added benefits, The Green Boomerang gives volunteers store credit for every hour they volunteer.

Please call Terri Hayden at (307) 672-2240 if you would like to help.

TERRI HAYDEN is the Director of Volunteer Services at The Hub on Smith.

SENIOR HAPPENINGS

- Conversations in History will be presented by Helen Laumann along with The Sheridan Historical Society Sept. 12 at 10:30 a.m. The topic will be the four railroads of Sheridan County. There is no charge to attend the event at The Hub on Smith.
- Young at Heart Players will present a three-day show under the direction

- of Pat Tomsovic. The show “Johnnie Black, Private Eye,” is a radio play on-stage by Bruce Scigliano and George Krawczyk. The show will take place Sept 12-14 at 1:30 p.m. There is a \$2 suggested contribution at the door. The play will be at The Hub on Smith.
- The Daughters of the War of 1812 will celebrate the writing of the

national anthem Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. There is no charge to attend the event at The Hub on Smith.

- A parking lot dance with music from We Too will take place Sept. 15 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Burgers and beverages will be provided; donations will be accepted. The event will take place at The Hub on Smith.



TERRI HAYDEN

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**FUN AND FOOD
BUILD YOUR OWN SALAD**
Mondays - Fridays
Entrees and kiosk include sides,
dessert and drink.

Salad Bar Available
Mondays - Fridays

No Salad Bar on
Saturday or Sunday

*entree only offered for Home Delivered Meals

ENTRÉE CHOICE* or SOUP/SALAD
Tue - Salmon/Chimichurri Sauce
Wed - Spaghetti & Meatballs
Thurs - Oven Fried Chicken
Fri - Chili
Sat - Teriyaki Steak/Egg Noodles
Sun - BBQ Chicken Breast
Mon - Beef Roast/Pan Drip Gravy

Tue- Watercolor Class Sign Up	10 a.m. -12 p.m.	Art Studio
Wed- Conversations in History	10:30 a.m.	Community Room
Thurs YAH Performance	1:30 p.m.	Café
Fri - Flag Day Celebration	10:00 a.m.	Community Room
Sat- AARP Driving Class	9 a.m.to 4 p.m.	Community Room
SAT- Outside Dance & Burgers	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	East parking lot

Lunch Service Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 365 days a year at 211 Smith Street
Home Delivered Meals (307) 672-6079

Loan Closet, Outreach, and Administration Services, 672-2240. Mondays - Fridays.

Help at Home Services, 675-1978. 232 North Brooks: Mondays - Fridays.

Day Break Adult Care Services, 674-4968. 241 Smith Street: Mondays - Fridays.