

Social Work Month occurs every March. This celebration honors social work as a profession and as a vital part of society. Social work is governed by a code of ethics that ensures best practice is being provided and needs are being met – both for individuals and for society. The National Association of Social Work (NASW) identifies the following ethical principles as essential to the social work profession: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Social work is an essential part of transplant and is required to be a member of the transplant team by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid for Medicare-approved transplant centers.

Social Work Month 2025

This year, the theme of Social Work Month is “Compassion + Action”. Most people are aware that social workers assist individuals and families with needs to navigate their daily lives effectively, independently, and confidently. Many are not aware that social work has a responsibility to our society as well.

Social workers are called to address challenges, crises, and inequalities within our society and work together to find effective, and reliable solutions that ensure basic needs are met with equal access to these necessary resources. Social workers are called to meet people where they are when these individuals seek assistance with whatever hardship they are encountering. When you meet someone where they are, you are showing them the respect and dignity each of us is entitled to. This creates an environment where people feel safe and that they can be vulnerable while discussing very personal concerns and needs.

“What does a social worker do?”

This is a question that many social workers encounter on a frequent (or at times daily) basis. It can be a difficult question to answer, as social workers are involved in many parts of daily living that have differing daily responsibilities and duties. Social workers can be employed in a wide variety of environments such as hospitals, senior centers, counseling clinics, prisons, community resource centers, nursing facilities, schools, and government.

The NASW defines social workers as those who:

- Help individuals, families, and groups restore or enhance their capacity for social functioning, and work to create societal conditions that support communities in need
- Help people of all backgrounds address their own needs through psychosocial services and advocacy
- Help people overcome some of life’s most difficult challenges
- Help prevent crises and counsel individuals, families, and communities to cope more effectively with the stresses of everyday life

Transplant social work

The Society of Transplant Social Work (STSW) was founded in 1985 and serves as a space for transplant social workers to work together and develop best practices to care both for our patients/families and on a professional level for our transplant social work colleagues.

STSW states that the primary purpose of a transplant social worker is to:

- Provide comprehensive social work services to patients and families through all phases of transplant
- Provide patient education and emotional support
- Coordinate patient care with other team members

Transplant social workers are involved from the initial referral for transplant and through the whole transplant process, including life post-transplant. Transplant social workers complete assessments and gather information on several aspects of patient lives to identify areas of strength and concern such as social support, financial support, compliance, mental health, and substance use. These assessments and resources help establish care plans that are put in place to maximize transplant success for patients requiring an organ transplant. Transplant social workers also provide patients with information on community resources that can be utilized for ongoing support.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This section of our monthly newsletter will focus on support and resources offered both by the Organ Transplant Center and throughout the nation. Please utilize these as you need them and reach out with any questions.

Kidney and Pancreas Line: 319-356-1136

Heart Line: 319-356-1028

Liver Line: 319-356-1137

Lung Line: 319-356-2016

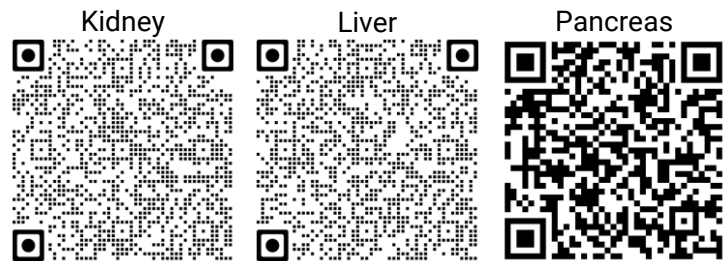
Medicare and Transplant

Medicare eligibility is based on age, disability, having end-stage kidney failure, or receiving a kidney transplant. No other organ transplant or need for organ transplant qualifies one for Medicare. There is a 1-year enrollment window for Medicare from date of kidney transplant. Delaying enrollment can increase chances of higher out-of-pocket expenses for anti-rejection medication. Medicare Advantage plans cover anti-rejection medications, and out-of-pocket expenses are subject to plan.

* For further questions or coverage changes, please contact the Organ Transplant Center Financial Counselors.

Video Resources

The Organ Transplant Center has put together videos to better explain the transplant evaluation process and provide additional patient education. Please scan the QR codes below to access these videos.



Organ Transplant Support Group

The UI Organ Transplant Center hosts a hybrid support group every other month – in-person and by Zoom. Each group is focused on a specific topic with speakers followed by time for discussion. If you have any questions, please contact 319-467-8385.

Location:

Iowa Donor Network
550 Madison Avenue
North Liberty, IA 52317

Date:

April 10, 2025

Speaker: Donor family

Zoom Information:

Meeting ID: 912 4992 0165
Passcode: 295183

Additional Resources

Social Security Disability

- [Adult Disability Starter Kit](#)
- [SSI Child Disability Starter Kit](#)

National Living Donor Assistance Center (NLDAC): [How to Apply](#)

Iowa Anatomical Gift Fund: [Application](#)

Iowa Donor Network / Writing Your Donor Family: <https://www.iowadonornetwork.org/transplant-recipients/writing-your-donor-family>

University of Iowa Telepsychology Training Clinic offers free, short-term counseling to lowans with limited access to mental health care.

- [Click here](#) to see if you qualify