

A conversation with Josh Morrison, February 5, 2016

Participants

- Josh Morrison – Co-Founder and Executive Director, WaitList Zero
- Alexander Berger – Program Officer, U.S. Policy, The Open Philanthropy Project

Note: These notes were compiled by the Open Philanthropy Project and give an overview of the major points made by Josh Morrison.

Summary

The Open Philanthropy Project spoke with Mr. Morrison of WaitList Zero in order to provide an update on WaitList Zero's grant. Conversation topics included its involvement in the New York Breakthrough Collaborative, its current funding, and an addition to its board of directors.

Update on ongoing activities

New York Breakthrough Collaborative

WaitList Zero is working on the New York Breakthrough Collaborative (the "Collaborative") as part of its strategy to increase living donation through state transplant support legislation. The Collaborative was conceptualized during a series of meetings with organ transplant stakeholders in New York, including New York State Senator David Carlucci; Rocco Andriola, Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of Save Lives Now New York; and Dr. Jean Emond, Chief of Transplantation at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia.

The Breakthrough Collaborative methodology is a way to stimulate progress in decentralized fields with wide variation in quality between different providers. An ambitious goal is set, stakeholders buy-in, best practices are shared, and data on outcomes is collected and publicized in the field to generate competitive pressure. A previous federally funded Breakthrough Collaborative focused on deceased donation throughout the United States from 2003-06 and increased organs donated by ~1,000/yr over the previous trend.

The Collaborative was conceptualized in part because New York State Senate Majority Leader, John Flanagan, is a supporter of organ donation and is receptive to working on the issue. The Collaborative would focus on both deceased and living donation. WaitList Zero hopes to use the Collaborative as a model for a national Breakthrough Collaborative focused specifically on living donation.

WaitList Zero is meeting with the Greater New York Hospital Association and the LiveOnNY board in the near future to gauge each organization's support for the proposal for the Collaborative.

Goals of the Collaborative

WaitList Zero has several goals for the Collaborative. WaitList Zero hopes that its voice in the Collaborative will ensure that issues related to living donation are not “crowded out,” or deemphasized in favor of issues related to deceased donation. Waitlist Zero also hopes that the Collaborative will result in the development of a useful living donor registry website. Ideally, this website would provide a variety of services relevant to the organ transplant community.

WaitList Zero’s strategic goal for participating in the Collaborative is to pass living donor transport support laws in New York and to use these laws as the model for national legislation. As part of the Collaborative, WaitList Zero will build partnerships with transplant stakeholders and transplant hospitals, and it hopes to be able to organize the patients on transplant waiting lists. With the development of these relationships, WaitList Zero believes that it will not be difficult to get transport support laws passed.

Funding

WaitList Zero has received \$35,000 from Novartis and a number of individual donations. WaitList Zero is also planning fundraising events in Washington, DC, Boston, New York, and San Francisco.

WaitList Zero’s current operating budget is approximately \$120,000 per year. Between the \$40,000 it currently has on hand and the funding pledges it has from several donors, it has at least a year of funding guaranteed.

Board membership

WaitList Zero has added Diane Brockington to its board of directors.

All Open Philanthropy Project conversations are available at <http://www.openphilanthropy.org/research/conversations>